THE LAND OF GODS AND EARTH-QUAKES

Frederick S. Hulse

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THE LAND OF GODS AND EARTHQUAKES

YOUNG JAPAN

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THE LAND OF GODS AND EARTHQUAKES

BY
DOUGLAS GILBERT HARING

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1929

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To

MY MOTHER

PREFACE

Man, inconsistent, loves consistency. Facing the contradictions of the universe, he attains peace in various ways.

The scientist lives by faith — faith that when he has described and analyzed all of experience, seeming contradiction will be reconciled in final unity.

The madman constructs his own consistent universe. He interprets events in harmony with his beloved delusion, refusing to admit that life is white as well as black.

The artist leaves the universe to its own vagaries. Selecting fragments, he skillfully pieces them together. Thus he comforts our souls; his riddles, unlike those of the philosopher, may be answered.

Japan's own artists, with brush and chisel, have set ideals that we who paint with typewriters cannot reach. Japan herself is a work of art; she continues to inspire all who yield to the spell of her civilization.

This book does not present a self-consistent picture. The Japanese, being human, are delightfully inconsistent. Human, they are lovable if one peer behind the mask of reticence that shields their hearts.

May those who read find herein the same interesting, alert, kindly folk whom the writer met in his wanderings.

Douglas G. Haring

Syracuse, N. Y.
1928

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SAKURA-NO-HANA (CHERRY BLOSSOMS)

Shiki shima no
Yamato gokoro wo
Hito towaba
Asahi ni niou
Yamazakura bana!

—Motoori.

Dwells in this fair isle
Yamato's dauntless spirit?
Say to all who ask—
Fragrant in the morning sun
Are mountain cherry flowers!

GETTING A NEW GOD

On a certain busy corner in Ushigomé are two 'rikisha stands. One radiates prosperity. Its 'rikishas are polished till they glisten; the pullers are young, strong, and light of foot. Prices are accordingly high. Across the corner two worn old men huddle away from the rain beneath a rude shelter, made of a piece of galvanized iron suspended between two close-placed telephone poles. Their 'rikishas are of ancient model, and are not polished like rich lacquer boxes.

When a street car stops, the old men turn and eagerly watch the outcoming crowd. On rainy nights, when 'rikisha men reap their harvests, the more prosperous folk run through the mud from the tram car straight to the big, up-to-date 'rikisha stand. There they are officiously greeted and hustled into the little vehicles, being carefully wrapped in fur robes and protected from the rain by rubberized curtains. The strong young men take the shafts and trot away in the mud, warm in their heavy raincoats, confident of a tip in addition to the fare at the end of their run. No one notices the old men; they huddle over a little fire in their kerosene-can stove, incarnations of hopeless, cast-off old age.

Somehow I could never get past those old men and take my 'rikisha from the up-and-coming side of the street.

Recognizing in me a regular customer, they both hopped to attention whenever I passed. It took them a long time to get a 'rikisha ready; they would rearrange the seat cushions, brush imaginary mud from the foot mat, and go over the fastenings of the curtains with trembling fingers before finally pronouncing the vehicle fit for use. Then, winter or summer, I would be solicitously tucked in, with a woolen blanket over my knees.

The old men were always ready to chat as they trotted slowly along, and many an illuminating comment on Japanese life escaped their lips. One night we were threading our way through the crowds at a "night show," amidst shouting barkers at the sidewalk stands. These night shows have an irresistible fascination: no matter how tawdry the wares or how outrageous the prices, there is always the impulse to stay and buy. On this occasion it occurred to me that the show had been continuing for three successive nights, which was most unusual, since on that street shows are ordinarily held but once or twice a week.

When I commented on the fact to the 'rikisha man, he was ready with the explanation.

"Yes, indeed, it has continued for three nights now. Do you not know of the new image at the temple?"

My confession of ignorance surprised him. Evidently the event was important, and I saw I had lost face. He went on:

"You know, business has been bad lately, and the Business

Men's Association of this ward sought help from the temple. The priest said no new *Hotoké Sama* (image) had been added to the temple for years and suggested that they get an image of Buddha from a famous temple on the far side of Tokyo. A big new image has been erected there, and it seemed a good opportunity to get the old one, which has acquired great virtue in its long years of service."

My ignorance extended to the new image in the other temple, but silence saved my face. He continued without exposing my lack of touch with current events.

"Well, last Monday they brought the image over, and held a big celebration. All the *geisha* from Kagura-Zaka came up and paraded; it made a splendid sight. The night show has continued ever since, and tonight is the end of the festival. I think the new *Hotoké Sama* will be a profitable investment."

Suspecting that the old man's head harbored some rudimentary notions of economic determinism, I asked: "I suppose the business men put quite a bit of money into it?"

"Oh, yes, they did. They had to build a new house to hold it, and then of course it was moved in style. Why, the head priest from one of the biggest temples came out and blessed it and conducted the installation. It was most honorably splendid."

"But," I asked, "when times are hard, do the business men have hope of getting back their money from this venture?"

"Oh, yes," he assured me. "I suppose most of them have already made enough to cover their investment, because of the crowds coming to the celebration. But that is only a beginning; this image has much virtue and should bring prosperity to the whole ward."

He trotted along in silence. The moon broke through the misty clouds and turned to silver the raindrops on twisted pines along the street. The old man regaled himself with the beauty of the night. At last he broke the silence.

"Sir, your honorable country is far away, is it not? Does the moon shine there so beautifully? Does it look the same as here?"

I assured him that it did, and he continued:

"They say that America is a wonderful land, with no muddy roads like this, and with buildings five or six stories high on both sides of the street. They say that electric lights make the cities as bright as day and that there are no jinrikishas, only automobiles. It must be a grand sight!"

I verified his impressions, adding that our buildings were sometimes more than six stories and sometimes less.

"Sir, I wonder what I could do there, if there are no 'rikishas. Surely I could not earn a living. I am too old to learn to drive a taxi. Even here in Japan the taxicabs are destroying the living of us 'rikisha pullers. I can barely make enough to keep alive. Tell me, do you have temples and images of the Buddha in your land? I have heard that

THE BLESSED BUDDHA

there is but one religion, the Jesus-teaching. Is that right?"

I told him it was true, but that there were many kinds of Christianity, and that unless dollar-worship could be called a religion, many Americans had no religion at all.

"But, sir, money-worship is universal. It has come to Japan now and is uprooting all of the old virtues. The Christians say that idols are superstition, don't they? What do you think about them?"

Again I was in a corner. I told him that Christians and many other folk regarded idols as superstition, but hesitated to hurt his feelings by bluntly saying that I so regarded them.

"Well," he soliloquized, "probably they are superstition. I don't know. Lots of Japanese laugh at them, but still they are all like me: when they want something, they run to the temple and pray for it. You know, the temples and the *Hotoké Sama* might really happen to have some power; you might as well take a chance, for it does no harm to pray to them. That's the way I look at it. I suppose that's what the business men thought when they had the new god moved over here. Yes, probably it is all superstition. But I'm an old man, and how should one like me know?"

The conversation ended abruptly, for we were at my gate. The old man offered profuse thanks for his tip, and as he departed I could hear him saying to himself:

"Yes, the Americans are rich without *Hotoké Sama.* Probably it is superstition. Who knows?"

THE YOKOHAMA THAT WAS

One's acquaintance with the Orient, if he go by the Pacific, begins with Yokohama.

You step off the liner into a different world: inwardly, outwardly, and to the olfactory sense. The small boats in the harbor are quaint, dirty, strange; the coolies on the pier, in skin-tight trousers and coats decorated with Chinese ideographs, often dressed in what looks like a suit of underwear or less — all these are new to an untraveled person and are an unconscious strain on his nervous system.

Wharves and warehouses are not greatly different from those on the eastern shores of the Pacific. The customs men have a disrespect for persons and baggage quite like that of their fraternity in American ports, save that their interest rarely goes beyond tobacco and liquor. If you have neither of these, your stay on the pier may be brief.

That language! Once it meets your ears, you know that this is no dream and you are really in the Orient. The inflexions, the tones of the voice, the unfamiliar twang, all leave no doubt that the European family of tongues has been left behind. It may be days or weeks before one is able to distinguish separate words in the avalanche of nasal speech.

Other sounds than those made by the people are strange. The first time one hears a locomotive whistle in Japan, his fingers seek his ears, for the high-pitched screech actually

inflicts pain if it be close by. Save for those of recent vintage, the locomotive itself is so tiny on its narrow-gauged track that it evokes a smile. Street pedlars with gongs and drums; the scrape, scrape, scrape of wooden shoes as the multitudes pass; the din of yelling 'rikisha coolies and noisy bicycle bells — all these strange sounds and sights, plus the smells, are bewildering.

A Chinese of impassive countenance and unbeatable arithmetic takes your American money and doles out an array of *yen* and *sen*, and you pretend to count the money as though you knew the exact value of each piece. There are occasional shinplaster bills of all shapes and sizes, the smallest being worth five American cents. Two *sen* copper coins, each as big as a half dollar, are worth one cent.

You seek a ride in a jinrikisha, and discover that it is never called by that name in daily speech. It goes by the name of *kuruma,* or " wheel," precisely as we call a bicycle a " wheel." None but a mythical being could avoid feeling foolish the first time he mounts one of those high, two-wheeled, rubber-tired chairs, pulled by a blue-clad person half his size.

The street cars are miniature four-wheeled tubs with narrow bodies and long plush-covered seats on which you will rarely have opportunity to sit. The shouting conductors at either end would add to a vaudeville performance. At first they are very funny. After one has stayed longer in Japan, street cars may arouse quite the opposite emotion.

The shops, which do away with show windows and

display goods directly to passers-by; the mud streets, innocent of sidewalks and frequently well under fifteen feet wide, with open sewers at the sides; the low, tiled houses and odd, twisty trees; the strange clothes and coiffures — all blend in a confusion which wearies the brain. One who has spent his days learning to be an American is suddenly faced with the necessity of unlearning his habits and assimilating a strange civilization, old and wise in its ways.

He had not called for some time, and when he did come it was to pour into my ears a copious apology for the absence. I had been in his country for so short a time that most of it was lost on me, but I gathered from the smile on his face and references to his mother that some unusual good fortune had befallen the worthy lady. Hating to admit that my newly acquired vocabulary was unequal to the situation, I took refuge in polite, noncommittal remarks. But when he stopped and I donned an appreciative smile in an effort to show that I understood perfectly, murmuring, "Isn't that nice?" I fancied that a flicker of either pain or shock crossed his face. The conversation drifted back within reach of my vocabulary and the call ended amicably enough.

Next day I reported the incident to my language teacher. That worthy Japanese gentleman peered apprehensively over his tiny steel-rimmed spectacles and inquired: "Do you know what happened to his mother?"

Humbly I confessed my ignorance.

"Well, she died last week. That's probably what he was telling you!"

My complacency evaporated. "Why under the sun should he be so happy about it?" I demanded. "How can one know that sympathy is called for when the bereaved seems to enjoy it so much?"

"Oh, you Westerners never understand us Japanese. We try not to burden others with our sorrows. He didn't want you to feel sad, and did his best to keep cheerful despite his inward sorrow. We always do that way."

Then a light began to dawn, illuminating much that I had felt to be callous and unfeeling in Japanese life. Perhaps the callousness might be protective armor forged by sensitive souls living in dread of self-revelation.

In the succeeding years I have found that insight to be true. I have been privileged to enter into the hearts of Japanese men and women, and invariably they have been human, torn by griefs and sorrows, or bubbling over with joy, often naïve joy over trifles; sensitive to beauty, full of eager desire for appreciation. How so emotional and sentimental a people as the Japanese could have acquired their popular reputation for inscrutability and lack of human feeling is more and more a puzzle to one who has come to understand them.

Yet he who takes thought may discover how the popular notion of the Japanese as mysterious and uncanny folk has arisen. Japan's history gives light. For centuries Japan was divided into feudal states, warring constantly among themselves, each little duchy against every other. Plot, counterplot, intrigue and espionage were universal. Rare was he who might trust his own household! The Japanese learned to keep their thoughts and plans to themselves, and in the Machiavellian atmosphere of feudal Japan, frankness

almost disappeared. He who lives in modern Japan may, if he choose, watch the race emerging from its chrysalis of suspicion into frank friendliness which a generation ago would have seemed impossible. Beneath the seemingly inscrutable exterior the sympathetic observer may discern a seething tempest of emotion, sentiment, and inner conflict which binds the Japanese to all humanity in a bond of common human nature.

Some Japanese are keenly aware of the psychological wall which their countrymen have erected between themselves and other races. Once while I was serving the customary tea and cakes to a Tokyo police inspector, who was checking up on the foreigners in his district, he discovered that I could understand his own language and grew confidential. He told of his problems in dealing with the foreign residents — how some of them, particularly newcomers, resented his calls, and how, with his meager command of English, he was at a loss to make it clear to them that his visits were inspired by the sincere desire of the Government to spare foreigners from embarrassment.

Suddenly he remembered that he had talked more freely than usual and began to apologize. "But truly," he burst out, "I can't help talking freely to you Americans. There is a warmth in your homes, an open frankness and lack of suspicion about you that disarms a man and makes him open his heart. I could never talk to another Japanese as I have done to you, and to think I have known you but a short time!

I wish we had your habit of friendly openness. No matter how angry we Japanese become over American government policies, it is difficult to hate individual Americans. I suppose Westerners must think that we Japanese are cold and mysterious. I wonder if we could ever learn to show people the friendly feelings in our hearts the way you do."

He was an unusual police inspector. I treasure the memory of his visits. But sooner or later in all Japanese one discovers that same desire to be one with the rest of the world, to tear down the barriers which separate them from other peoples.

Flowers which bloom thus in sheltered nooks of human hearts are sensitive. It does not take a very sharp frost of scorn to wither them. Perhaps that is why anti-Japanese movements hurt the Japanese so deeply, and also why the pain is proudly covered by a brazen armor of insolence or military pride. The depth of the hurt caused by anti-Japanese measures taken by Western nations has been concealed by the traditional self-control, when a more volatile nation might have been stirred to fury.

Japan, the land itself, is inscrutable and treacherous. Fire, typhoon, tidal wave, earthquake, landslide, and volcano take sudden toll of life and labor. It is easy to recall such disasters and see their imprint on the character of the people.

A tidal wave killed sixteen hundred persons in the Tokyo district in 1917. I remember long rows of houses, each with

a hole torn through its tile roof where frantic inmates had burst their way to freedom when swift-rising waters barred the doors. Some houses had no holes in their roofs: men were removing corpses from those houses. There were long stretches of bare ground where a day before had been a teeming slum. Half a mile away were piles of tangled débris, where the wave had deposited its fearful load.

Closing my eyes, I see again the conflagrations which sweep the inflammable, crowded cities. A slight, blue-clad figure mounts a fire-tower and pounds the gong more violently as the flames draw nearer, until there is an end of ringing amid the crackling and roaring of fire on all sides. The people are tossing their valuables into sheets and fleeing that the fire may have its due. Once more I see the aftermath: wide, blackened wastes with only an occasional *kura* standing with fire-scarred walls.

Again I feel the creepy fear of an impending typhoon, that scorching, devastating storm which is a terror to the Orient. Drops of moisture condense on stone walls, and even on plaster, as the hot, suffocating storm approaches. I feel the fierce blasts of wind, so hot that leaves wither in an hour —blasts punctuated by ghostly moments of silence, each followed by the oncoming roar of the next blast. I smell the salty breath of the sea, as spray torn from its waves is flung inland to bring death to tender plants that never saw the ocean. Then comes the desolation of the morning after, the pathetic humor of the call from a polite neighbor who

formerly had a tin roof: "Pardon the intrusion, but have you by chance seen my roof?"

Volcanoes often give warning, but landslide and earthquake strike down their thousands unannounced. A rumble, the crash of falling vases and dishes, a wild rush to gather children and gain the open; then the seasickness which comes only when terra firma is no longer solid and trees wave as no breeze ever moved them. The waves in the earth come more and more gently, and quiet returns, save for the barking of excited dogs. Shall we enter the house, or will the quake come again?

Buried in the ruins of Japan's stricken cities lie tales of bravery and self-sacrifice which belong to mankind's imperishable heritage of glory. Buried in the same ruins are the fruits of human cowardice, cruelty, and stupidity. After each disaster come forth the people — stricken, silent, dull. They have met Fate and have no comment. Patiently they rebuild and take up again the tangled pattern of life. Inscrutable? Know them where they live, peer into their hearts, share with them the disasters and trials of life; then will mystery and strangeness disappear and humanity and emotion, pathos and beauty reach forth from behind that mask of inscrutability to tug at your own heart.

"EACH HOUSE WITH A HOLE BROKEN THROUGH ITS TILE ROOF WHERE FRANTIC INMATES HAVE FOUGHT THEIR WAY TO FREEDOM WHEN SWIFT-RISING WATERS BARRED THE DOORS"

MEAT FOR DINNER

"One quarter of a pound of beef, please."

A neat, plainly dressed woman stood before the counter at the public meat market. The clerk took a "hunk" of meat and sliced off another "hunk," as irregularly shaped as the parent piece. "Slice it?" he asked.

The woman, eager-eyed, nodded. With deft, sure strokes of a triangular knife, he cut it into thin, wafer-like slices. "How many?" he inquired.

"Six," she answered. Six thin red slices fell into the scale pan.

"Thirty *me*," he announced. A *me* is one-hundredth of a Japanese pound: 120 *me* make a pound, avoirdupois.

The woman's face clouded. "I can't pay for more than twenty-five," she half whispered. One look at the disappointment written on her features would forever end belief in Oriental "expressionlessness."

The butcher regarded her shrewdly. "Six in the family?" he asked.

She nodded dully.

"Too bad for you to be left out — here, I'll put in all six slices, and you pay for twenty-five *me*."

The worn face of the woman lighted. Sunshine never broke through storm clouds more gloriously. "Really? Thank you — thank you," and leaving twenty-five *sen* on

the counter she was off with her six bits of beef, the family's weekly feast.

In a Japanese household the wife and mother is last and least. First the man eats, then the boys, then the girls. If anything remains, the mother has her turn. In many of the homes of the common people, meat is a rare delicacy. Should the slices fail to go round, there is no question as to who will get them. Everybody works but father, and everybody eats but mother. Sometimes the tradesman looks behind the scenes and "has a heart."

The butcher's charity often vanishes when the foreigner comes to buy. I was waiting in line at a meat market and noting the prices paid by the customers ahead of me. It was in the days when meat was cheaper. I observed a woman buying a hundred *me* of the best beefsteak for one *yen*. Recollecting that I had not paid as little as one *yen* for a long time, I reasoned that the foreigner was usually charged more.

I asked for a piece of the same meat, and received it from a different clerk. The price, I was told, would be one *yen* and twenty *sen* per hundred *me!* Before I could try out the nice long Japanese sentence I had been thinking up in an effort to be scathing and sarcastic, the first clerk sidled up to his mate and whispered, "Look out — that foreigner saw me sell that meat for a *yen* — better not soak him this time!" With a murmured apology about "a mistake in calculating," the price suddenly came down. Americans are rich — have

we not read it? Who could come from such a land of gold and be poor?

Sometimes the American unwittingly aids people to conclude that he is fabulously rich. I once wanted some smudge sticks for mosquitoes and asked for three boxes at a near-by store. The shopkeeper regarded me in amazement. "Three boxes? Who ever heard of buying so much! I can sell but one!" he protested.

"Why?" I innocently asked, "You have five there. Can't you spare three?"

"Yes, indeed, I have five, but if I sell three to one person I must go again so soon to buy more. I can sell but one."

"Don't you want to sell more goods and make more money?" I asked, bewildered in turn.

"Money? Make more money?" he repeated in a sort of daze, upset by the idea. "If I sell so many boxes, I must go down town and buy more. It is too much trouble. I am sorry — I can sell only one."

There are sometimes potent reasons for the refusal to build up a bigger business. A friend of mine loves to tell of an old shoemaker who had a shop in the foreign section of Tokyo, before the big earthquake eliminated the foreign quarter. The old man did excellent work — in fact, the foreigners all brought their shoes to him for repair. He was, however, weeks behind with his work. Neither pleadings, threats nor sob-stories could induce him to decrease by a minute the time spent on a shoe.

My thrifty friend endured the spectacle as long as he could. After waiting three weeks for a half sole, he took the old man to task. "Why not get some helpers and supervise them, instead of trying to do it all yourself? Your work is good, and you could soon build up a big business and make a lot of money."

The old man looked around, saw that they were alone, and motioned him to sit down. "There's a reason, my friend, why my business must be small," he said. "I have a dozen penniless but voracious relatives, and my wife has more than I. All are equally poor and equally possessed of appetites. Do you not see that if my business were to prosper, they would, without exception, decide to live with me? And if I refused to take them in, they would paint me as a heartless rich brute and make my life miserable in a thousand ways? Now they look at my dirty shop, hear people complaining of my work, and say, 'He has nothing — who would want to stay with him?' and I have peace. So long as my parasitic relatives are alive, I must in self-defense remain poor."

Thus the dealer in miscellaneous goods is content to sell one box of smudge sticks where he might sell three, the shoemaker sticks to his last with studied inefficiency; thereby they achieve liberty and peace.

MORE DEADLY THAN THE MALE

Japan, so they say, is the land of masculine rule. The Japanese call America the land of petticoat rule. But we shall see what we shall see.

Late one hot summer evening I found myself in a tiny hamlet in a backward part of Japan, waiting for a train. Progress had mercifully spared the place. The night was dark and there was little hint that a village surrounded the station. Mosquitoes tormented me as I sat on the bench under the electric lights, until at last I was forced to move despite the profuse perspiration called forth by motion on so hot a night.

Once away from the glare of the station lights, it was necessary to halt until my eyes could make out objects in the darkness. Slowly, thatch-roofed houses took form along the one street, their paper doorways dimly illumined by candles or oil lamps. On my right a two-story hotel was open to the breeze; three women squatted on the floor under a large mosquito net, smoking tiny pipes and chatting loudly. In the next room a man was lying flat on the floor, having sought escape from the muggy heat by removing the last remnant of his clothing. He was safe from mosquitoes under a big net of his own and was bawling orders at a maid who trotted back and forth with bottles and glasses. Man ruled.

The squat houses held little of interest. Many of them had store fronts — ramshackle shelves and counters laden with straw sandals, cheap candy, bottled beer, and other staples popular in mountain villages. All were dimly lighted, and in each the inmates had triumphed over the heat by the simple expedient of disrobing.

Suddenly a shrill-voiced woman began shouting commands at a girl, and I turned to see the cause of the break in the village peace. The girl was clad in the coarse cotton *kimono* of a peasant; her hair and general appearance, like the older woman's, were dishevelled and unattractive. I caught the woman's parting injunction: "Now don't let him fool you; get that money!" and heard the girl reply: "Yes, mother!"

Having had enough of the squalor of the village, I started back toward the station. The girl was trotting ahead of me and made straight for the office of the station master, where a half dozen employees were lolling on tipped-back chairs. She went up to one man and announced:

"Mother sent me to get five *yen*. She must have it to pay that bill tonight . . ." — but before she finished the sentence, man's natural authority over woman came to vigorous life. In a fury he yelled at her: "Get out of here! No money for either of you fool women! All she does is ask for money! Go home!" He rose to chase her out, but experience had evidently taught her that discretion is the better part of valor, and she departed in haste. He settled

back in his chair with a grunt. The other men laughed. "That's the way!" said one, "Don't trust the women with money!" To which the bold he-man replied—"No woman gets ahead of *me!*"

The mosquitoes had barely settled back to their meal before a rapid scuff-scuff of wooden clogs announced another hasty arrival. A determined note in the steps boded ill for someone. The woman herself emerged from the darkness, her *kimono* hanging back off one shoulder, revealing a well-built set of shoulder and arm muscles. "Why didn't you give the girl that five *yen?* Do you think you can beat me?" she cried, advancing into the office. The man, so bold a moment ago, cowered like a scared puppy, while his companions laughed uproariously. "Come on, I'm in a hurry!" she demanded. But before the threat in her voice had been translated into action, the five *yen* were humbly handed out, and she departed with a flourish. The man in the case sat silent a moment, getting scant enjoyment out of the grins on the other faces. Slowly he rose. "I'm going out to inspect those switch lamps," he muttered as he vanished into the night.

. . . . . .

Give a woman money regularly? How could a man be such a fool? So thinks—and says—the average Japanese male. But there are ways.

An apprentice boy, pupil in a school where I once taught, was telling the story of his life. He had come from a

back-woods village such as the one just described. His mother dreamed of educating her son, but the father scouted the idea: "What need has he of school and fine words? He will run the shop better without education!" The mother stuck to her dream. At length she saved some thirty *yen,* a fortune in the little village. With this the boy ran away and started school.

At this point in the story my curiosity got the upper hand. "How could she get so much money?" I asked.

He grinned. "You're a foreigner, or you would know how some Japanese women get their spending money. It's this way: whenever the 'old man' was out of the store and she made a sale, she hid the proceeds. Sometimes she even took a few *sen* from the money box. He never missed it. It took a long time to get thirty *yen,* but she got it!"

. . . . . .

Once upon a time (but this is no fairy tale), there lived in Yokohama two young Americans, newly wed, innocent of the ways of housekeeping and purchasing. They bought their groceries from a Japanese store which catered little to foreigners — and thereby hangs our tale. When Mr. American went to buy, the prices were invariably a few *sen* higher than those charged Mrs. American for the same goods. They puzzled over the matter, and hubby even came to live under a shadow — that shadow which has darkened the life of many a young husband who was his wife's inferior in driving a bargain.

Truth will out, and in this case it emerged when a Japanese schoolgirl grew intimate with the young wife and one day offered to save her a trip to the store and buy the groceries in her stead. The American gave her some parting advice in this vein: "Watch out for that storekeeper. He *always* cheats my husband, but I know his tricks and get things cheaper. Don't let him overcharge you!"

The schoolgirl grinned and went her way. With never a hint of higgling, she bought her order at the same price the wife had been paying. Just to make sure, she remarked to the storekeeper: "The Americans complain that you always charge Him more than you do Her. Why is that?"

The storekeeper grinned. "What's the matter with those American women? Is she foolish enough to tell her husband that he pays more than she does? Any Japanese woman would know enough to charge the higher price against the house accounts and keep the difference for spending-money. That's one way I keep customers!"

The men rule in Japan. Try it yourself.

SHOPPING

The tram came to a jerky stop in front of one of Tokyo's busy public markets. It was 11:10 on Saturday and the market would close at noon. Acknowledging his inferiority to the Japanese, who never has to aid his wife on shopping tours, the American male trotted meekly along with his superior half, submerged in a throng of Japanese housewives bent on their week-end purchase of supplies.

The Japanese all carried the inevitable *furoshiki* — square, brightly colored pieces of cloth used for wrapping and carrying everything from a bunch of bananas to a package of hairpins. Having long since learned to do as the Romans do, we also carried one — a blue and yellow cloth which would be equally acceptable as pillow top or table cover.

The greengrocer's shop came first. Aside from potatoes and tomatoes, his stock comprised an assortment of unknown vegetables beyond my powers of description. Lotus roots, roots of a plant resembling the ornamental leaves that American children dub "elephant ears," bunches of fuzzy green beans, piles of leaves comparable to our mints and cresses, roots of a kind of burdock, seaweed, big chestnuts, and the familiar forms of onions and eggplant were among the more conspicuous. We were not alone in being unable to name the vegetables: one Japanese lady was inquiring the price of "this bunch of leaves."

Fish and rice being Japan's staple foods, the fish business is usually flourishing, but just at this time fish shops were deserted. Posters, put up by the police, hung on all sides, reminding the public of the danger from cholera, which continued sporadically after the usual summer outbreak and was being vigorously fought. The posters were graphic: horrible demons labeled "Cholera" grabbed the innocent citizen, and the legend beneath read "Boil your water and eat no fish!" This epidemic had been traced to the eating of fish from infected waters; consequently many fish dealers had failed.

Chickens and eggs are never found in meat markets, but are sold in separate shops. It is not unusual to find stores dealing in beef or pork only. The sudden taboo against fish had directed prosperity toward the meat markets and chicken shops. The vegetable stalls also were feeling the increased demand for anything but fish.

We paused at a little shop which specialized in canned goods, imported and domestic. In an obscure corner the feminine eye detected five tiny jars of a well-known American brand of salad dressing which we had never before seen in Japan. After a year and a half of searching for it in Japanese stores we were offered the object of our longings by this out-of-the-way stand in a public market! True, the entire stock consisted in five three-ounce jars, and the price had more than doubled on the way across the Pacific, but our *furoshiki* soon contained some American salad dressing.

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There were American canned fruits and vegetables — always a threat against the family budget in these parts. They were priced from sixty cents (U.S.) a can up. The *furoshiki* began to bulge, for the budget had been worsted in the debate.

The adjoining stand displayed new figs, four for five cents when reduced to American money. Anything so cheap was bound to land in the *furoshiki* after the extravagance of a moment before. Like a telescope suit case, there is no ready limit to the possibilities of expansion which these square cloths present. One equipped with both a *furoshiki* and a Boston bag should be prepared for anything.

Now for the chicken shop — and be it understood that he who is invited to a Japanese chicken dinner will not see his host carve an entire chicken. The chicken dealer cuts the meat from the bones and doles it out by the pound, selling the bones separately for soup. The meat is so skillfully sliced that even a narrow piece of breast is cut like a broad, thin slice of steak. We watched two men at the chicken shop performing feats of magic with their sharp knives, as they cut chunks of meat in zigzag fashion, so that the chunks would open out flat into pieces like a slice of ham.

No whole chickens were to be seen, but we could not give up the idea of an entire chicken to carve and asked if they could secure one. It couldn't be done; the shop, although large, contained only parts of chickens. Perhaps by after-

noon an entire chicken might arrive in one piece — but then the market would be closed.

Eggs are bought by weight, the dealer exchanging different sized eggs in the scale pan until the exact weight is arrived at.

The presence of a pickle shop is announced by the odor: no sign is needed. A blind man knows when he is within a block of one. When one is accustomed to them, Japanese pickles are really delicious, but the odor scares the Occidental at the start. Probably every nation favors some food that disgusts other peoples. Cheese is the article of our own diet which the Japanese profess to regard with disgust and nausea. In any international contest for the worst-smelling food, the Japanese pickle ought to do better than honorable mention. The pickle man usually carries intoxicating liquors and dried fish as well as pickles; the blend of odors is quite indescribable.

The Japanese appreciate the unique distinction of their pickles. A famous story tells of one of Japan's great judges, who by a shrewd knowledge of pickles and of human nature, forced a thief to confess. A certain housewife kept her money in the bottom of the pickle vat (this was before the days of paper money and the germ theory). A boarder in the household, being "broke," suspected the hiding place and, in the wife's absence, held his nose with one hand, reached to the bottom of the pickle vat with the other, and extracted the money, which he promptly spent.

The woman went to court with her tale. The judge ordered that all persons connected with the household, as well as the neighbors, be brought before him. This done, the magistrate explained the nature of the crime, remarking that it would be easy to catch the thief, for his hand would still smell of pickle liquor. One of the group involuntarily put his hand to his nose. The judge pointed to him, saying sternly: "There is the thief. Under the circumstances, no one else would have occasion to smell of his hand." Confession followed.

Our shopping is finished. The market is full of interesting sights, but families are hungry. We climb the stairs to the street and join the housewives on the street car — all of us carrying bulging *furoshiki*.

PICKLES AND LIQUORS

THE HONORABLE FOXES

Insurance is not the only way to protect your household, if you live in Japan. The fox gods are worth looking into as an investment. So reasons the man on the street.

One day I entered a dirty little restaurant to buy some sugar and beheld one of the most elaborate shrines to the Honorable Foxes that ever met my eyes. Household shrines are universal, but this one was a work of art.

The corner of the room at the left of the entrance was wholly given up to the display. Ornamental rocks had been used to construct a miniature garden, with real grass and moss growing in the crevices. Sacred paper prayers to the fox gods were hung about, and one was laid over the stones. On top of the pile stood two neatly sculptured stone foxes, with red Chinese characters proclaiming their purpose. Above them was a small wooden shrine, hung with paper charms and straw rope. Straw rope, be it known, prevents the passage of evil spirits. In front of the shrine were more tiny conventionalized foxes.

Above this display was the "god-shelf," found in practically every Japanese home. Here stood a more elaborate shrine, surrounded by all the usual votive offerings and, in addition, a fine set of eight pairs of china foxes, arranged facing each other and in order of size. Incense burned drowsily beneath. What wandering fox spirit could fail to

be pleased by such attention to his needs? Surely here was a house protected from the pranks of the foxes. Yes, and more — for the foxes would positively bring good luck and riches in return for such honors.

Despite the lavishing of all this wealth and energy on the spirit world, the household was plainly poor. The god-shelf and shrines were by far the finest part of the furnishings. The family sat shivering in a circle around the charcoal brazier, trying to warm their chilblains. Two weeks later I passed the place and found it empty — family, restaurant, and foxes alike departed for unknown quarters. A torn sign in the window announced that the restaurant equipment was to be sold at auction; the date of the auction had passed. Perhaps there was some mistake in the arrangement of the shrine and the foxes had visited the offending family with ill fortune instead of riches. Who knows?

The fox cult has its roots deep in Japanese custom. Even the prosperous business man who has been abroad, who wears a frock coat and top hat, is often inclined to steal away to some quiet shrine and offer prayers and incense to the fox spirits in hope of a lucky run on the stock exchange.

Allied to the fox cult is the collection of superstitions, hardly to be dignified by the name of cult, regarding the badger. The badger can bewitch folks. He can make you into a fool, so that you will do all sorts of things otherwise impossible. He may appear as a beautiful princess, while one badger famous in Japanese folk lore turned himself into

a teakettle and wrought havoc among the priests in a temple. It pays to watch out for badgers. Sometimes they bring great good luck.

About the same time that I discovered the fox shrine described above, Tokyo was enjoying a quiet chuckle at the expense of a well-known wine merchant. He had been entertaining ghosts, and weird tales of their doings went the rounds. There were strange noises in his warehouse, behind the piled-up casks of liquor. At the same time his business increased by leaps and bounds. After a few months of this prosperity he concluded that his warehouse was inhabited by friendly ghosts; he erected a little shrine to them and daily placed suitable offerings before it. The offerings were regularly spirited away by the ghosts. Business increased so fast that he began to dig back into the piled-up reserve of casks. Then the ghosts came to light — a happy family of badgers.

The wine merchant made the best of it, despite the laughter of his friends. He put the animals in a cage where they might amuse his customers, and did his utmost to keep them contented. But his solicitude for their welfare was chiefly motivated by the desperate fear that the badgers might be displeased with their new surroundings and take away his run of luck.

SEVENTEEN MILLION EXTRA MOUTHS

To comprehend Japan, ancient or modern, one must needs be schooled in the psychology of the polite fiction. From olden times Japanese have unblinkingly pretended some things to be as they wished them to be, serenely disregarding the facts. "From ages eternal" Japan is said to have been ruled by one Imperial family. This is maintained despite the fact that no Japanese written records antedate A.D. 600, and despite the fact that the actual ruling power has generally, until modern times, been in the hands of usurpers called "Shoguns." The *shōgun* has privately ordered the nominal ruler to issue such-and-such commands, and then with much show of obsequiousness and homage has humbly carried out the Imperial behests. The polite fiction saved the day.

By virtue of the polite fiction, brave warriors of old were deemed to have performed the heroic ceremony of hara-kiri, when in fact they had merely made a gesture toward the abdomen with a wooden dagger as the executioner's sword was descending to bring a more merciful release from life. By the aid of the polite fiction, the vulgar new-rich produce delicate poems and clever literary compositions for each other's admiration; everyone concerned being aware that the real authors are penniless students boarded and fed by the rich in exchange for their talents.

Still, the polite fiction has limits. Such transparent but pleasant self-deception may be charming in a feudal nation, but it takes sterner stuff to set aside the working of economic laws in an age of commerce. Ten years after the World War, Japan was bravely pretending that her economic fools' paradise of war-time inflation could last forever. Confronted by revitalized European competition, her mushroom industries of war years had come to grief. Her swollen gold reserves could not stem the tide of an adverse trade balance. Politicians and press assured the nation that all remained lovely, despite the appeals of the finance ministry for drastic economics. The earthquake of 1923 dealt another blow to the Japanese economic structure, but the polite fiction of stability was feverishly maintained. Deflation, painful but salutary, might do in the Occident — but Japan needed no such measures.

The earthquake helped to maintain a semblance of prosperity. Like a war, such a disaster temporarily stimulates business by need for rebuilding devastated cities. Ultimately, nations that fight or quake must foot the bills; then comes distress. In the "panic" of 1927 Japan's polite fiction collapsed.

Japan cannot lightly dismiss some real causes of misery. Her islands are overpopulated: less so than her people think, but still overpopulated. Though but little larger than the state of California, the islands contain over sixty million people. The annual rate of increase, 1.1%, is less than that of

the United States; but even then, 750,000 or more hungry mouths are added to the empire each year. There must be food for those mouths.

Some lover of figures has calculated that *if* Japan were completely industrialized, *if* efficient scientific methods of production were general, and *if* she carried on a huge world trade, she might support a population of ninety millions. She aspires to the American standard of living; she is, however, but only slightly industrialized, her production methods are wasteful, and her world trade has dwindled. Judged by newer standards of living, she has food for forty millions or forty-three millions. This leaves seventeen to twenty million hungry stomachs! The results are a lower standard of living for all and a perpetual excess of imports over exports, despite 100% import duties on "luxuries" which Americans would call necessities.

Overpopulation is felt in a myriad ways. The low scale of living and the overcrowding of city and country alike are obvious to all comers. There are still areas capable of more intensive exploitation and settlement, but even allowing for these, the "great open spaces" are not in Nippon.

Makeshift solutions of the population problem appear regularly. Everyone favors sending the surplus to Brazil, Manchuria, or Korea; but no one is willing to consider himself surplus and emigrate. The Japanese has little of the pioneer spirit: he is a lover of bright lights and crowds of his own kind. Nothing can coax him to exchange the

THE AVERAGE JAPANESE FARM IS TWO AND A HALF ACRES; THIS IS A TYPICAL FARM HOUSEHOLD

fleshpots of Tokyo or Osaka for the "barren deserts" of Manchuria or the jungles of Brazil. Only with difficulty is he persuaded to go to Hokkaido or Saghalien. No sooner does he arrive there than he pines for release from the chill fogs of the North and dreams of the Ginza in Tokyo.

Matters might improve were fictions discarded and the situation squarely faced. Militarist philosophy does not help; it travels around an endless circle, no matter where you begin:

We have too many people and not enough resources;

Therefore we must expand and secure new resources;

To expand we need a big army;

We must encourage large families, to obtain enough soldiers;

Our families being large, we have too many people and not enough resources . . .

In all ages and climes this refrain is strangely monotonous. Germany religiously chanted it. Japan's military caste sing it, and not a few of the rest of us can at least hum the tune. Such a philosophy greets with horror the thought of a stationary, self-sufficient, happy population. Birth control is anathema. Modern medicine complicates matters by reducing infant mortality and prolonging life: in ancient Japan the population was kept within bounds by drastic measures.

Overpopulation has brought China to dire ruin and may yet prove the millstone about the necks of us all. Until it is dealt with honestly and unblinkingly, "Conferences of

the Powers," "International Loan Groups," Bolshevik Utopias that won't Utope, new battleships, and banquets for diplomats will accomplish nothing but misery. Japan is face to face with actual overpopulation. Even if she could have averted her ruinous financial panic, even if her bold, brave sabre-rattlers could conquer some sparsely-settled "great open spaces," even though her merchant ships were to plow the Seven Seas with bursting holds, her expanding population would invite fresh financial disaster, it would fill up the "open spaces" and the same old ghost would return to snatch the food from her daily rice bowl. Only as she abandons her passion for increase and the false theories which inspire it, can she solve her problems. Nor can the rest of us pretend that we have no such questions of our own.

Despite the loud voice of jingoism, the Japanese as a people fervently desire peace with the world. They have become convinced that happiness lies along the paths of peace, and they are prepared to join with anyone who will travel the same road.

But — those seventeen million extra mouths — who will feed them?

ETIQUETTE

Japanese etiquette does not come out of books that are mailed to you in a plain envelope after you have clipped the coupon from the magazine advertisement. It is never referred to. Nor is it easy to learn. The polite Japanese will let one go on making blunders indefinitely rather than be so rude as to offer correction.

It is easy enough for foreigners in Japan to blunder. Everything differs so widely from Occidental ways that the foreigner is almost certain to be wrong. Of course, on the American side of the Pacific, the differences are emphasized, and most people know that —

In Japan one removes his shoes on entering a house.

A man lifts his hat to other men, but not to ladies.

Men precede ladies, on street cars, through doors, in seating, in being served at meals — in fact, everywhere.

Eating on the street is the height of rudeness; this effectively bars the chronic gum-chewer.

It is rude to drink tea or soup in silence. The correct gurgle is a matter of long practice.

On moving to a new house, you make the first calls on your neighbors; they do not call on you.

A guest is kept waiting outside a closed door while the maid takes his card to the host.

It is entirely permissible to undress in public. Passengers

on a railway train often make a complete change of clothing in the aisle, no one paying the slightest attention to the process.

It is the height of bad breeding to tell a guest that your wife is a fine cook and he is about to receive a good meal. Rather one should say: "My fool-wife makes a horrible mess of cooking; it is exceedingly unfortunate that you must be served such vile stuff." In serving the food you refer to it as "filthy stuff," while your guest industriously proclaims its virtues. Anything belonging to oneself is vile; anything pertaining to the person addressed is honorable, exalted, wonderful, perfect. One's own children are referred to as "ignorant fools."

Praise must be carefully tempered. The least excess of praise of something belonging to another person amounts to asking for it, and unless one watches his step he will receive as a gift the thing he thoughtlessly admired.

The handshake is not used. If it can be avoided, one never touches another person. For this reason football and basket ball make headway only with difficulty, while tennis and baseball are popular.

Whenever you greet or part from another person, or whenever something polite is said, both parties bow slowly, from the hips, not at the neck. The hands are placed on the legs and slide down toward the knees in bowing. When two are seated on the floor, Japanese style, each touches his forehead to the floor in a deep bow.

A speaker bows to his audience, and the audience returns the bow.

Money is never mentioned in polite society. A Japanese gentleman of the old school was expected to be unable to count money.

Teaching is the most respected profession. Like the gift of life from one's parents, the impartation of knowledge is considered above purchase, and in the older etiquette the teacher was revered above one's father. Just as one does not pay a salary to his father for bringing him up, so a teacher is not to be paid wages as one would pay an artisan. Universal education and modern customs have necessitated changes in this system, but even yet the teacher is respected and offered gifts of many sorts. In olden times teachers received no pay but were frequently given generous gifts. To offer a teacher a salary was an insult.

One begins to suspect that Japanese etiquette, queer and strange though it seem, is the living expression of a unified culture, old, wise, and deliberate. The more one learns Japanese ways, the more he appreciates the respect for the personality and reputation of other people which is enforced by custom.

For instance, when a man is dismissed from his employment, he is not " called on the carpet " and " fired." Instead he is notified by a " go-between " or by a slight reduction in salary that his services are no longer desired. After he has resigned, ostensibly of his own accord, he receives a generous

bonus. Should his position be a respected one, he will perhaps be guest of honor at a splendid farewell banquet, at which everyone makes speeches paying glowing tributes to his successful work, and at which he may receive a generous money gift. If he has occupied a position for eight or ten years or more, he will probably receive a full year's salary to tide him over until he gets another place.

Etiquette reaches its long arm into the entire industrial system; for example, workingmen are generally protected from the consequences of unemployment by a system of dismissal allowances, ranging from one month's to two years' salary, determined by length of service. Companies carry reserve funds to meet such allowances in case of a shutdown, and workers are spared the suffering which in other lands is the result of sudden unemployment. This system is a relic of benevolent feudalism. Save where organized labor insists upon its continuance, it is passing away.

Japanese wage scales are incomprehensible without understanding of the bonus system. Large bonuses at New Year's are universal. In prosperous times these may be out of all proportion to the salary. The average man prefers a small monthly stipend and a big year-end bonus for two reasons: first, because he thereby dodges the income tax, since the bonus is a gift and not taxable; secondly, because he always needs money at the year-end to pay up his bills. Every debt of any kind whatever must be settled in full before the Old Year passes, under pain of losing social standing. Many a

"THE EXPRESSION OF A UNIFIED CULTURE, OLD, WISE, AND DELIBERATE"

young business man on a monthly salary of one hundred and fifty *yen* ($75) receives in prosperous times as much as four thousand *yen* at the year-end.

Excessive consideration of the other man's feelings is often a nuisance. Japanese can rarely be persuaded to criticize a foreigner's use of their language or his blunders at their etiquette, much as he may really desire to know where he falls short. If he can blurt out two words in Japanese, he invariably hears: "What beautiful Japanese you speak! How exactly like one of ourselves! How did you learn it so well?" The same consideration prevents one from indulging his wrath by calling down an inefficient servant. The high and mighty lord of the kitchen may resign if his skill be questioned by any complaint about his cooking; and he may even post the offending employer on the blacklist of the cooks' union, which means no more cook till peace be made.

This consideration of others never goes as far as the prevention of gossip. The Japanese show that they are one with the rest of us in this respect. They have a very fitting name for gossip — "bad mouth."

Occidentals consider it flattering to receive an invitation to call on someone. The Oriental view is that since an invitation might be refused because of the guest's previous arrangements, it is far more polite to call on a man than to invite him. Japanese customs are, however, rapidly changing.

Certain things which to us seem rude are considered polite

in Japan. The invariable greeting is "Where are you going?" while the weather is not in favor as a conversational ice-breaker. Introductions are infrequent, and the Occidental often finds himself embarrassed by his host's failure to introduce. The Japanese introduces himself, and the formula is always: "I meet you for the first time. I am Suzuki (which name is the Japanese version of Smith). Please regard me with favor."

A guest studiously avoids that part of the room known as the "place-of-honor," usually crouching close to the door. A call resolves itself into a battle of wits between the guest, who modestly tries to stay near the door, and the host, who tries to maneuver him into the seat before the "place-of-honor." Detailed etiquette covers the serving of meals and drinking of tea, the method of sitting and rising, where to put one's hands, the use of cushions and mats, and a host of similar acts. This all applies more rigidly to women than men, the latter being more or less free to do as they please. Even the language of the sexes differs, there being different words and grammar for men and women. The "woman-talk" is always more polite, therefore more complicated.

The departing guest carries his wraps outside the house, often clear to the street, before putting them on, and is embarrassed if the host attempts to aid him with them. That being impossible with shoes, the guest simply steps into his wooden clogs, which a thoughtful hostess or

maid-servant always turns around as soon as the caller enters the house, to be ready for his departure. If he wear high leather shoes, there is a painful delay in the farewells while he sits down in the entrance to lace them up. Hence our high shoes are called by the Japanese "Five-minute-good-bye."

Nothing short of an entire book could cover Japanese etiquette. As an expression of genuine refinement, it deserves time and study.

"EYES BUT THEY SEE NOT . . ."

Superstition is almost synonymous with man. It is a far cry from the clay idol of the African savage to the collection of lucky trinkets, old clothing and fetishes which the American college student cherishes during examinations, but beneath the skin all men are brothers in superstition.

The Japanese are no exception. Sometimes their superstitions call forth an indulgent smile: again they are indices of tragedy. One chuckles over the antics of devotees of Fudo *Sama,* the Fire God, as they run naked through the streets of Tokyo on the coldest nights of winter. The sight of hundreds of victims of eye diseases, all bathing their eyes in the same tub of holy water at an Osaka temple, is sufficiently revolting to submerge toleration in disgust.

One bit of magic creates lumps in the beholder's throat. At almost every shrine and at many temples there are images of gods, Buddhas, foxes and other creatures credited with healing power. Invariably these are covered with clothing and toys. When a child of superstitious parents falls ill, something belonging to the child is tied to the image in the pious hope of hastening the little one's recovery. Fuzzy toy dogs, tiny wooden sandals, red and white bibs by the dozen, and small *kimono* hang on the images, often many layers deep. Their mute appeal is never stilled. One does not laugh at that kind of superstition.

In the Asakusa temple, Tokyo, there stands a wooden image of Binzuru *Sama.* They say it is Binzuru: no one could recognize him, for the image is worn to a shapeless lump of polished wood. The pious come by thousands: first they rub the image, then rub the corresponding part of their own anatomies, that virtue may pass into themselves. Old and young, leper, cripple, syphilitic: the strong seeking more strength, the dying clutching at a final straw of hope — there is utter democracy before Binzuru *Sama.*

Other gods are for special purposes. Prostitutes have their own gods, to whom they pray for more and wealthier lovers: there are fox and badger shrines where business men may pray for luck on the Exchange, or for a quick sale of their bonds abroad. Benten *Sama,* goddess of beauty, never lacks suppliants: nor do the hairdressers and beauty doctors who have paid high rent for shops adjoining her shrines. One Benten shrine in a back-country district has been transformed by the Government into a shrine of the official cult of Shinto, a center of patriotism: but the women still worship in the old way, hoping that their deity has not altogether forsaken the place which man has so rudely taken away.

The unseen is real to the Japanese. The spirits of his ancestors dine with him on occasion: the gods and powers of Nature live and deal with men in no uncertain fashion. Does the skeptical Occidental say that idols have eyes but see not? Ah yes! but it is the foreigner who walks with unseeing eyes in the Land of the Gods.

CHILD LABOR

The streets of Japanese cities furnish plenty of object lessons on child labor. Small boys toil along dusty roads under the blazing sun, pulling heavy loads on two-wheeled carts. Other boys, pedaling furiously, furnish motive power for bicycles with trailers or side cars, always heavily laden with all sorts of merchandise. The delivery boy from a restaurant whizzes past, also mounted on a bicycle, which he steers with one hand. The other hand holds aloft a pile of lacquered boxes, delicately balanced with skill worthy of a professional juggler. A dozen diners depend on that nicety of balance, for each box contains a dinner which has been ordered by telephone or messenger. A carpenter's apprentice goes by, whistling in spite of his burden of lumber and tools. From shop doorways the faces of boy and girl clerks peer forth, seeking fresh air and sunshine. At the noon hour, when factory workers pour into the streets, many of them prove to be mere children.

Japan has excellent child-labor laws — on her books. For the most part they have not yet been put in force. The Diet may pass all the laws it pleases, but until the final authority puts them in operation, they merely decorate the records.

Apprentice boys have a hard lot. They work long hours for a mere pittance — often nothing beyond their board, clothing, and a sum equivalent to twenty-five American

cents monthly. The board and clothing, needless to add, are not of the best. Often the boys hoard their pennies till they have saved enough to pay tuition in some night school for a term, as they are generally eager to better their lot. They are full of fun despite their troubles; the spirit of childhood is hard to crush.

Spinning and weaving mills often employ mere girls for long hours, at night as well as by day. Industrialism exacts a heavy toll of health; the effective life of these girl workers is surprisingly brief. The factories recruit new girls by all sorts of devices, and their agents are so persistent that it is said many houses in poorer districts bear signs reading "We have no daughters," in order to forestall the agents. At any rate, thousands born to the pure air and simple life of the farms have suddenly been herded into unsanitary factories and filthy dormitories, where the moral as well as the physical environment is of the worst.

There are enlightened firms which employ only adults under reasonable working schedules and which have clean factories where workers are protected against accident and disease. These firms have in general located in the country in order to provide employees with comfortable homes and wholesome environment. Such concerns deserve great credit, for their constructive steps are taken in the face of severe and unscrupulous competition.

Save in banks and schools and a few business houses, Sunday is not established as a day of rest. Department stores

and shops in general, like the trades, pay no attention to it. They do recognize one or two regular monthly holidays, and Japan's national holidays are numerous. However, the free Saturday afternoon and Sunday of the American worker are unknown. It is inevitable, under such conditions, that the pace of Japanese industry should be slower and the workers less efficient.

Family industry is characteristic of Japan. Children are employed at home under worse conditions than in factories. Among the poorer classes every family makes something — toys, incense, match boxes, artificial flowers, candy, and so on *ad infinitum*. Even the tiniest toddlers take a hand in the work from dawn till late at night. Thousands of girls are employed as nurses for babies. With a heavy baby strapped to each back, often when the "little mother" herself is scarcely larger than the baby, these girls work and play all day long. They play industriously when opportunity offers — even though solicitous bystanders feel grave concern for baby's bobbing head, as the girl who is wearing him on her back joins in a game of hopscotch.

The philosophy of some employers of children is interesting. A certain American missionary took considerable interest in apprentice boys. One day he met a very small boy struggling to pull a huge cart loaded with merchandise up a steep, long hill. The boy was barely equal to moving the cart on the level; the hill was beyond his utmost powers. Moved with pity, the missionary lent a hand. Together

A CAMERA TAKES THE JOY OUT OF TWO YOUNG LIVES

the two pushed, pulled, and sweated till the load had reached the top. Indignant at the spectacle of so small a boy compelled to do such heavy work, he asked:

"What kind of man do you work for, anyway? Has he no more humanity than to send a small boy like you with a heavy load like that?"

The boy grinned. "He hasn't any humanity, sir, but he isn't foolish. He can make more money by using a boy like me, for it saves paying two men. If he sent a man with a load like this, the man couldn't get up the hills alone and nobody would help him, and so the boss would need two men. If he sends a boy, the boy can manage the cart on the level, and when he comes to a hill, the boss says, there is sure to be some sucker who will feel sorry for the kid and help pull the load up the hill. The boss is smart, sir!"

CHERRY BLOSSOMS AND *SAKÉ*

Japan is the land of cherry blossoms — blossoms, not fruit, for the fruit of the flowering tree is worthless. Some Americans know little about Japan aside from the fact that cherry trees bloom, and there seems to be a vague impression that they bloom the year round. The cherries do bloom marvelously, but in Japan other things are forced on one's attention. Mud and fleas bloom the entire year, while the cherry display is over in ten days. For months at a time one may forget all about the flowers, until they burst forth in springtime glory and force him to take notice.

By general consent cherry season is a national holiday period. Everyone goes to see the flowers — ostensibly. Even were the flowers to vanish completely, the larger part of the crowds might never miss them. An ancient proverb says, "Without liquor one cannot see cherry blossoms." Therefore the crowds go prepared. Many a man carries a two-quart bottle of *saké* (rice wine) slung over his shoulder. Before sundown he has parted with the empty bottle.

Not all Japanese participate in this general debauch. One year I innocently asked a group of young business men if they were going cherry-viewing. Their reply was unanimous and emphatic: "Not for us. No decent fellow can go now; it's nothing but a low carouse." This may be a bit exaggerated, for many decent people do go and come home

sober. On the whole, however, the crowd is unmistakably drunken.

Once I visited one of Tokyo's most famous show places, Arakawa with its five-colored cherry blossoms. A Japanese friend accompanied me. We started early in the morning, for we must ride the entire width of Tokyo by surface car. Tokyo sprawls over an enormous area, and going clear across the city by tram is a test of endurance. At last we reached the Arakawa, a sluggish, muddy river which varies from a raging torrent in spring to a streak of gravel in summer. Here the bottle-laden crowds converged upon the gaily decorated docks of rival boat companies.

We climbed aboard a huge barge, built upon the lines of a Chinese junk. The interior had been fitted with straw mats on which the passengers, having removed their shoes, stood or squatted Japanese style. A motor lighter took us in tow and we were off with a shout.

The Arakawa is no long, peaceful reach of water bordered by green banks. For a mile or two both shores are lined with chemical factories and fertilizer plants. One gets a startling whiff of chlorine, and the next breeze chokes the victim with the odor of bone fertilizer. Then a combination of smells from some chemical plant whose chimneys belch sinister clouds of colored fumes furnishes a final proof that Progress with all her trappings has invaded Japan.

After several miles of varied scenery the strange craft tied up at a crude floating dock and everyone scrambled for shore.

A long walk over an unmistakably Oriental wooden bridge took us across the flood channel of the Arakawa. On the far bank was a road lined with fully grown cherry trees, in whose scraggly shade a continuous double line of booths and shops offered refreshments for those whose supplies ran low. *Saké,* foods, fruits, toys, charms for the superstitious, pop, and near-ice-cream were to be had on every side. A chorus of *"Irasshai!"* ("Welcome! Come in!") greeted us from the owner and entire staff of each shop. The crowds wandered up and down the long road, stopping now and then to pour cups of *saké* from their bottles and thus gain vigor for another look at the cherry blossoms.

The blossoms themselves amount to nothing. The trees are badly kept. The famous five colors are difficult to distinguish. In theory Arawaka is the place of all places to see the five colors which the Japanese cherry exhibits; in practice it is a dreary waste of drunks, empty lunch boxes, and screaming shopkeepers, with a few scrawny cherry trees overhead. Three varieties of flower — single pink, double pink, and double white — were easily identified. Afterward I found four colors in my own yard — the three mentioned and the rarer green variety.

As noon approached, the crowd increased. We met troops of *geisha* girls dressed in all the hues of the rainbow. There were groups of young men out for a riotous time. Gangs of coolies, already beastly drunk, staggered along the road. Strolling musicians with *samisen,* flute and drum, enlivened

the scene by costumes as gay as their notes. Families laden with children and lunch boxes, and often with *saké,* wandered past — the women carrying the children and lunches and the men the *saké.*

Young couples walked arm in arm, oblivious to crowds and blossoms alike. Japan is changing: a few years ago it was exceedingly rare for a man to walk with a woman. A couple walking arm in arm would have been hustled to the police station. The American movies have done their work.

Satisfied with what we had seen, we sought the dock. Barges were unloading people by the hundreds. These later-comers were noisier than the early birds; they, evidently, had taken advantage of the boat ride to reduce the amount of *saké* in their bottles; they were volubly happy. The policeman at the dock said to us: "Why return so early? The fun is just beginning! Evening is the busy time, and half past ten at night would be an early hour to leave!" Climbing on the barge we found ourselves almost the only returning passengers, although it was past noon.

A GHOST DANCE OF OLD JAPAN

The night express does not stop at the town where I spend the summer months. To reach Tokyo, one must board the down train early in the evening, getting off three stations farther from his destination. There he meets the panting express as it takes water for the grueling climb over the mountain range that rises abruptly from the Japan Sea. That involves a half hour's wait in a little town which is Japan in miniature — a most incongruous mixture of ancient and modern.

My first experience of the place emphasized the modern, albeit in a misty setting that threw over it the romance of Old Japan, the Japan that always hovers just around the corner from the silk mill or over the mountain behind the electric power station.

I dropped off the train squarely in the path of the station master, who bowed most politely and said: "I suppose you are a foreign technical expert coming to the factory here?"

To which I responded that I was indeed foreign, but that no sane person had ever called me a technical expert. He laughed. "Well," he said, "you're the first foreigner I've ever seen who was not a technical expert. That's the only kind we ever have in this town."

I explained that I planned to catch the express, and he said, "Let me punch your tickets now and I shall not trouble

you again. Make yourself at home — but station benches are none too comfortable!" With a bow he was gone.

Gradually my eyes adjusted themselves to the darkness. I made out the thatched roofs of the village; here and there a dimly lighted store where one might buy straw sandals or incense to drive away mosquitoes, a tiny shop where children's pennies would obtain gaily colored bean candies or rock sugar — just a nondescript Japanese town. The glaring lights of the big factory across the track, the roar of its machines, and its chemical smells typified the spirit of western industry seeking to drive the romantic and leisurely from even this nook in the mountains.

I was dozing off when something made me sit up and rub the sleep from my eyes. Was this a dream? Here was a parade of ghostly soldiers, marching in heavy order, making never a sound, each man clearly silhouetted against the velvety sky as he passed across the track, a scant hundred feet away. Silently they emerged from the night — silently they passed on into darkness, their heavy boots muffled by the soft dust of the roadway. There was no song, no command, not even a cough to break the stillness. Never did reality seem so unreal.

When they had vanished, I pinched myself to be sure that I had not dreamed as I dozed. Strain ears and eyes as I might, the darkness had swallowed them, several whole companies. Remembering at last that an army target-practice ground lay in the neighboring mountains, I was able

to convince myself that this was no theatrical performance, that the shadowy forms had been flesh and blood.

The rattle of the express put an end to dreaming. The sleeping-car boy was soon trotting down the long platform; he called me by name, grabbed my bags, and announced that my berth was ready. Evidently he had memorized the passenger list, sorting out with care the names and places of getting on. Since in a Japanese sleeper one disrobes nonchalantly in the middle of the aisle, the boy was on hand to fold my trousers and fasten them in the hanger, carefully draping my coat on top of them and assisting me into the berth.

A week or two later I was making the trip again. As the train dumped me at the same village I wondered if more ghosts would walk. As I entered the ticket office, the station boys were sneaking away from the watchful eye of the station master, into the darkness of the village street. I dropped my suitcase beside the ticket window, and then caught the rhythm of drums beating out an esoteric tattoo. This time I should see a real ghost dance.

I sauntered out of the station toward the sound. All was pitchy black, not even a candle visible. I could hear, mingled with the drums, the monotonous refrain of an age-old chant, sung by young voices; then, drawing nearer to the sound, I heard the clapping of hands in time to the singing.

In the darkness I could at length make out shadowy

forms, young men and maidens clad in *kimono,* gravely performing the intricate steps of an ancient folk dance — swaying, turning, and clapping hands with alternate partners. The old chant rose and fell; the steady throbbing of the drums never varied. It was a rhythm unused by Occidentals — a five-beat measure, with a delicate tracery of sound from a smaller drum woven in and out through the steady boom of the big one. The Orient knows the uses of rhythm.

Occasionally a pair of dancers would drop out of the circle and retire to one side, where a cask of *saké* provided refreshment, probably ultimate intoxication. But all seemed proper enough; no matter what a Japanese may do, his inbred love of decorum prompts him to do it decently and in order, save where Occidental contacts have upset the old ways.

For the half hour before the express rolled in, I watched the young folk repeat the ghost dance of their fathers, there in the darkness, just as it had been danced for summers uncounted to welcome back spirits of the departed for a brief sojourn in the ancient village. The factory had not driven out the spirits; the railroad was powerless to dispel the charm of Old Japan. In this place a thousand years had seen youths and maidens hold rendezvous with the ghosts in midsummer. Even in the twentieth century, young Japan could steal away from factory machines and station routine to dance away the hours of darkness, for Old

Japan with its charm and mystery, its ghosts and fairies, was living again through one brief night.

The train, with its departing roar, drowned the singing and clapping. But as we chugged up the mountain I could hear the deep boom of the drums — "one-two-three-four-five, one-two-three-four-five"; in my berth I dozed off to the same refrain, caught up by the locomotive and magnified by the echoes.

WHEN TRUTH WAS STRANGER THAN FICTION

One who did not pass through the Great Earthquake has properly no right to rush into print on the subject. Those who could tell the most thrilling stories are reluctant to talk, preferring to forget those awful days.

After I returned to Japan to live once more in the devastated area, some former pupils called to exchange experiences. Among them was one boy whose death had been graphically described in letters from his chums: but here he was, alive and well. We all sought to draw him out, though with little success until his best friend, whom we shall call Masao *San,* had finished his own story: and then the one who had returned from death to life took up the tale. We shall call him Také *San.*

Masao *San* worked in a wholesale grocery house in the hardest-hit section of Yokohama. We were all interested to know how he had escaped death, and he readily told his story: "I was 'way in the back of the store: it was nearly noon and frightfully hot. I was planning to get a dish of shaved ice with my dinner, and my mind was on the meal, when suddenly there was a roar, and canned fruit, breakfast food and bottled beer began to rain down on me from all sides. From the front of the store came a terrified cry of 'Earthquake!' and I felt the building coming down. Just

in time to save myself from death under the falling brick and heavy timbers, I dived beneath a desk. The dust was choking, and on all sides I could hear the screams of the injured. Although the shocks still continued, I pushed away some of the débris in front of my little cave beneath the desk and looked out. All was pitchy dark and I gave myself up for lost. There came another terrific shock, and after this when I peered forth from my cubbyhole I could see a streak of light above. I said to myself: 'Masao, if that light can get down, you can get up.' I tore at the tangled mass, and after what seemed a long time, I was on top of the wreck. Aside from torn clothes and bleeding hands, I was uninjured. I suppose the whole thing had not taken fifteen minutes, but it seemed hours. The dust cloud was stifling: the buildings on all sides were gone. Smoke was rising from fires here and there, and I knew I must hurry to escape alive.

"Then I thought of Také *San*. Had he escaped? So I climbed over the wreckage to the place where he worked and called his name. A voice answered from beneath the débris. I started to dig, and some of the other boys showed up and helped me. We all dug away bricks and tugged at the timbers with might and main.

"When we got down to Také *San* the fires were only a block or two distant. We found him pinned under a heavy brick chimney which had fallen intact and rested its whole weight on his arm. All of us together couldn't budge the chimney, which was held down by the weight of other

wreckage. Finally the fires came so close that we had to go. He never shed a tear, but we all wept to leave him. We ran and scrambled over the wreck of the city till we reached the sea, after some close calls on the way. A man with a sampan picked us up and rowed us over to the 'made-land' where the relief headquarters were later set up."

The boys nodded their understanding. Nearly all of them knew from experience that leaving your friend to die is harder than facing death yourself.

At last Také *San's* tongue had been loosened. "They did their level best to save me — they would have stayed to die with me if I had let them," he burst out in defense of his friends. "I guess God saved me," he said soberly. Také *San* was a Christian.

"When they left me, I kept on hoping, even though there was nothing I could do. I closed my eyes and prayed, and then I knew for sure I would get out. The fire came closer and closer; the heat was awful. The building next door was on fire, and embers dropped all over me. My *kimono* began to burn, but with my free hand I kept putting it out. Then came a crash: the remainder of the wall between the two buildings had collapsed. Simultaneously I realized that I was free! The shifting of the weight had somehow raised that chimney just enough to release my arm, and I lost no time in getting out. My *kimono* was smouldering. I tore it off and ran naked, stumbling now and then over bodies. Fire was all around, but the street was fairly clear and at

last I reached the park. The water mains had burst and flooded the place. I was weak from loss of blood and the pain in my arm, as well as the pain of the burns. I just sank down in that cool mud and that was the last I knew.

"When I came to, some sailors from a battleship were picking me up. They told me two days had passed. The city was all gone, and I got a glimpse of Fuji where formerly buildings had shut off the view. Smoke was pouring up from places which were still burning, and the smell of burned flesh was terrible. The sailors said I had been saved from the heat by the corpses of those who fell on top of me. They put me on a boat and took me to Kobe. The hospital folks said there were fifty-four wounds and burns on my body, beside the broken arm. They treated me well and I recovered steadily. Of course I lost track of the other boys, and I suppose, Teacher, that was why they wrote you I was dead. I guess you were surprised to hear from me, weren't you?"

I agreed that I had been very much surprised. Six different boys had written me about how bravely Také *San* had died; and then came a letter from Také *San* himself, postmarked Kobe. That letter had produced its full share of amazement when it reached New York.

Také *San* laughed. "But you weren't as surprised as Masao *San*." The boys all grinned and Masao *San* looked sheepish. I turned inquiringly to Také *San,* who provided an explanation. "Not knowing where the other fellows

ON THE "BLUFF," YOKOHAMA, AFTER THE 'QUAKE

were, I couldn't write them that I was safe. When I got well and revisited Yokohama last month, my first thought was to go to the scene of my narrow escape. The old brick chimney still lay in the same spot, the rubbish and timbers burned away from around it. I sat down on the chimney and thought it all over.

"Just then who should come whistling down the street but Masao *San!* I was delighted to see him and called: 'Masao *San!* Masao *San!*' He turned, saw me, gave one wild yell and ran away as fast as he could go. I realized that if he got away I might not be able to find him again in the confusion of the city, so I chased him full speed. Fear of the ghost must have made his legs weak, for I caught him and finally convinced him that I was no ghost and everything was all right."

Masao *San* looked foolish. "Well, Také *San,* do you blame me for running? How could I know you were not a ghost? If you had been sitting anywhere but on that chimney!"

WHERE THE POOR MOURN

The traces of the Great Earthquake are disappearing. Official reports tell of efforts at reconstruction and show imposing rows of figures. New concrete and steel office buildings tower above the narrow streets of Tokyo. The disaster seems to be forgotten.

But down in the slums where people died like flies, one sees the reverse of the coin. In Honjo borough, on the former site of the military clothing depot, 32,600 people were burned to death, their bodies heaped in one awful pile. A little shrine holds their ashes, and the visitor is informed that a splendid memorial is to be erected. In the interim there is not much to see unless one reads faces.

This plain building, embodiment of the grief of thousands of the very poor, is not maintained by any one religion. All creeds pray together for the souls of their loved ones. At one side is a Buddhist temple with droning priests, incense, and the other apparatus of that religion, and a sign saying that Buddhists may perform their special ceremonies here.

Mourners approach the place dry-eyed, with pathetic bunches of flowers and bundles of incense to burn before the ashes. They bow in prayer, and depart dry-eyed as they came, but often with a hopelessness on their faces which is not good to behold.

Here are two soldiers, young conscripts in brand-new

uniforms. One is evidently bereaved, the other his friend. The mourner carries a bunch of azaleas, plucked along the way and wilted by the heat of the sun. He buys some incense, lights it at the perpetual fire before the temple, and bows in prayer for a moment. With a gesture of sorrow he deposits the flowers, and the two boys hasten away, their stoic resignation more touching than tears. Not a family in this part of the city is intact.

To one returning to Japan after two years' absence, one fruit of the disaster is clearly evident. There is an increased tenderness in the attitude of the people, appearing in little things. The Japanese are undemonstrative, but beneath the stolid exterior are genuine emotion and warm sentiment. The mask seems less inscrutable than formerly, and in Tokyo and Yokohama at least, hearts show through a bit oftener. Suffering brings kindliness in its wake.

RUSHING THE GATES OF HEAVEN

Heaven is full. At least one of them is — for you cannot travel far around the world without learning that there are as many heavens as sects.

How do I know that Heaven is full? By the same token that folk in America intimate that the Christian Heaven is not overcrowded; they figure out how many people are meeting the requirements and conclude accordingly.

St. Nichiren was one of Japan's great religious figures. He lived before the days of the United States; he had a brilliant, checkered career as a Buddhist leader, and left behind him a trail of legends and miracles of surpassing wonder. He also left one of the most vigorous of Japanese religious sects — the Nichiren Buddhists. They include many of the poorest, most ignorant people. Their renown rests solidly on narrowness, nationalistic zeal, and noise.

The noise is my theme this time. For by it, I know their special Heaven to be full, running over, and seeking room for expansion.

Nichiren is credited with having taught that the true believer attains Heaven by much repeating of the prayer *Namu myōhō renge kyō* ("I worship thee, Scripture of the Wonderful Lotus"); according to the vigor and number of his repetitions will he be saved.

When the Nichiren sect has a feast or prayer day, the

neighbors do well to move out. To lend pep to the prayers, each believer arms himself with a drum, tin pan, or any other noise-producing instrument, and beats it with might and main in time to his rhythmic prayer.

When was St. Nichiren's Heaven filled up? On September first, one year after the great earthquake. Like all other Tokyo people, the Nichiren believers assembled to pray for the repose of the souls of those who perished in the catastrophe of a year before. I doubt if the dead Nichirenites got much repose. I didn't. No one else in the neighborhood did. About dusk they began, down at the foot of the hill. They deserved congratulation on the efficiency of their noise-producing devices — drums, gongs, pans, and wooden resonators. Had they held that prayer meeting in America, every small boy in town would have joined the sect. They started slowly, speeding up as the night wore on. As late comers arrived, the noise increased. About ten o'clock someone joined in with a big gong that outdid all the rest. At midnight they were still going strong, and many times in the wee small hours I woke to hear the din unabated.

If any Nichiren followers who died in the earthquake and fire, or any who died since, or who died during all the hundreds of years since the turbulent saint himself passed on — I say, if any of this multitude remain out of Heaven, it is simply because Nichiren was not prepared for the rush, for the night of September first saw noise enough to admit them all with honor.

Yet back of the din lay pathos. These people were not beating their drums for fun. They believed that the hope of happiness of their loved ones who had perished rested upon their faithful, noisy praying and pounding. There is no smile upon the face of a Nichiren believer as he pounds and yells. It is serious business. The devotees sit in a circle, heads thrown back, beating their drums in a frenzy that grows as the night wears on.

Nor were they alone in their prayers. All of Japan prayed that day — sóme hastily and carelessly, but most with agony in their hearts. Few in the Tokyo district had no close friend or relative among the victims of the preceding year. The hundreds of Buddhist sects held their ceremonies. The Shinto groups did likewise. So did the Christians, while the Chinese colonies had Confucian ceremonies.

At 11:58, the hour of the great 'quake, whistles and fire bells sounded throughout the Empire. Street cars and other vehicles stopped. For two minutes the nation bowed in prayer to its many gods. I think the Great Father heard them all; He does not pass lightly over the grief of a nation.

Ever since the shock of the preceding year, the hands of the great clock in the Tokyo Central Weather Observatory tower had remained pointing to the fatal hour of 11:58. As the nation bowed in prayer, the pendulum was again set in motion. Japan had made her fresh start.

"But, sir, the earthquake was worse than war, because all soldiers who die fighting for the Emperor ascend to bliss, while we don't know what happens to the poor souls who died in the disaster!"

Thus was my ignorance enlightened by the country youth who was carrying my baggage from the station. In one sentence he summed up the secret of Japan's astounding rise as a military power and the philosophy of the common people. He disclosed the reason for the hopelessness of the crowds which throng the little tin-roofed wooden shrines where the bones of earthquake victims repose.

His remark was provoked by my suggestion that international war seemed a foolish and barbarous practice for enlightened nations, since the real enemies of mankind seemed to be fire, earthquake, floods, disease, and carelessness. He agreed that disease and earthquakes were terrible enemies of man, but his reason why they were more dreadful than war differed from my own. War, to him, might be welcome as providing a gateway to Paradise for thousands who might otherwise fail of attainment. Who can blame Japan's bureaucrats and militarists for their implacable hatred of those people who "pervert the popular mind" by teaching "dangerous thoughts," such as the notion that death

in battle does not necessarily bring eternal bliss, and that war is a curse to civilization?

But what would have happened to Japan without this idea to unify the nation and give backbone to her resistance against Western aggression? The thousands who worship spirits of departed soldiers at the magnificent Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo come away with heads held high, proud that their families have contributed sons in the Emperor's service. The souls of the faithful who have died in the service of their country are enshrined here. The place is a symbol of the spirit which has made modern Japan.

Could Japanese militarism survive a wave of agnosticism regarding the fate of the soul after death?

CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY

The *Gun Chō* of Kami Mino Uchi *Gun* in Nagano Prefecture committed suicide a few years ago because the people in his district were too poor to make a living and pay taxes.

In Kami Mino Uchi *Gun* ("Upper Within-the-water County") the *Gun Chō,* or county mayor, has an unenviable task. The people are poor. Their land is all chopped up with volcanoes, mountain gorges and untillable hills covered with bamboo grass. Bamboo grass defies every effort of man towards its eradication, and no animal will touch it. Therefore Japan has no sheep and few cattle. This weed grows about two feet high and is so tough that two blows from a hatchet barely cut it. It spreads underground by runners which are as tender and easy to break as a piece of iron wire, forming a network which is almost impossible to dig up.

The Japanese farmer keeps this bamboo grass out of his fields by unending hand labor. When the land is so situated that it cannot be used for rice growing, he gives up the fight. In most of Japan it is possible to raise two or three crops a year on the same land, but in the mountains where "Upper Within-the-water County" is located, there is a regular New England winter and the people are thankful for one crop a year. Although they raise much timber, they are so poor that while it is still young they cut it for poles, firewood or charcoal. When one sees the charcoal-burner in action—

or the woodcutter — one understands why charcoal-burners and woodcutters are always the desperately poor folk in the fairy tales. They are poor in real life, not merely in fairy tales.

The Japanese have never adapted themselves to cold weather. Even in Hokkaido, the northern island, where American farming methods have been adopted, the people have failed to change their living habits sufficiently to conquer the chill of winter. In these backward sections of Central Japan, the peasants shiver in little mud and straw huts all through the long cold winter, and starve along on the coarsest, meanest fare.

Thus it comes about that the people of "Upper Within-the-water County" are desperately poor; among the poorest in all Japan. They are a simple-hearted, kindly folk, and the traditions of ancient Japanese life are unchanged. The mountain streams have been harnessed. Electric lights twinkle in the peasant's huts, but otherwise the rush of material progress has passed them by. Feudal loyalties are still strong, and so is the feudal sense of official responsibility.

The *Gun Chō* made a brave effort to teach the people new ways of doing things. He sought to introduce new methods of agriculture. He helped the summer resort on Nojiri Lake to get a start, hoping it might bring prosperity to the district. Nevertheless, his best efforts seemed only a drop in the bucket.

Taxes must be paid, but the people could not bear the

EVEN THE WOODCUTTER ENJOYS A JOKE

CHARCOAL BURNERS—THE POOR IN REAL LIFE AS WELL AS IN FAIRY TALES

burden. Imperial Japan has prestige to maintain, though her peasantry know the price of empire. What could a faithful official do? He must be loyal to the Government. The Government makes no mistakes; if it asks for money, there can be no question. Still, the people were his children; Confucius laid that to the hearts of all officials. His "children" were so desperately poor. The path was clear to an honorable Japanese — his life must end. Then the Government would understand and the people would know he had done his best.

Old Japan is passing. But who will not regret the passing of that sort of official conscience?

THE ARTISTRY OF THE JAPANESE

There is a myth abroad that the Japanese possess artistic gifts superior to those of other races — that even the humblest naturally exude beauty from their finger tips.

One stroll through a modern Japanese city should dispel that illusion. The horrible architectural atrocities that greet one on every hand could not be tolerated by such a fairy folk as the myth-makers have pictured; neither could the endless lanes of mud which pass for streets, nor the smelly open sewers, nor the dark brown canals with their slovenly banks.

Still, if the Japanese be not an artistic people, there is little to say for the rest of us. The Mediterranean races are artistic, but rumor whispers that dirt and bad architecture are not entirely unknown on the shores of that sunny sea. As for America — one glimpse of the average midwestern town, one ride into New York City by rail, or one ramble about the decadent end of any of a thousand Main Streets ought to save us from accusations of being artistic.

Mankind, whatever its color or speech, is about the same under the skin. Every land has artistic folk, and mixed in with them is always a plentiful supply of "the rest of us." Japan benefits by having possessed in her past some artists of consummate ability. Most of them died unsung. Perhaps many were simple workmen and workwomen: more than one of Japan's great artists have sprung from humble

surroundings. Aside from the sculptors, the makers of pictures, and similar folk commonly termed artists, we may profitably look at some commonplaces of Japanese life.

The interior of a Japanese house is usually an artistic achievement of first rank. Present-day Japanese rarely appreciate that fact. They cling through force of custom to paper doors, artistic windows, and the chaste simplicity of the " place of honor " at one end of the room. The natural grain of unfinished woods is strikingly used in Japanese homes, with harmonious and restful effect.

The Japanese *kimono,* now beginning to be superseded, even among women, by European clothing, is another artistic triumph. For simplicity, grace, and modesty of outline, it stands in history as an outstanding achievement of the designers of clothing. Who invented the *kimono* and its accompanying garments? No one person may have the credit. The foundation was the old Ming costume of China, still to be seen on the Chinese stage. The present form is the product of a long evolution, with here and there an unsung artist to add to or subtract from the original till perfection was attained.

Then there is the Japanese garden. Nature herself furnished the models, but other peoples with like opportunities have insulted rather than flattered her. Somewhere in the misty past, artists have given the Japanese garden its main outlines and produced the underlying ideas which govern its layout. Although the Chinese have contributed much,

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a Japanese garden is distinctively Japanese, with its Chinese elements thoroughly made over.

Japanese pottery and lacquer ware owe much to Chinese influence. The latter in particular as a distinctively Japanese art stands unrivaled by the best efforts of other peoples. The longer one lives in Japan, the more he admires the lacquer ware produced for the domestic market and despises the gaudy productions designed for export. Whether or no Japanese possess native discrimination between the good and the bad in art, they at least have sound traditions.

Therein is the key to the tale that all Japanese are artistic; they have no more natural ability than the rest of us, but from childhood they are reared in the sounder traditions of their culture. How much attention do we pay to flower arrangement, either in the education of children or in our own habits? Yet there are great artistic possibilities here which we overlook. Our vases carelessly filled with flowers, are as jarring to a Japanese visitor as a badly tuned orchestra to a musician. Every girls' school teaches flower arrangement; the average Japanese woman can transform a room with a few blades of grass, a simple wildflower, and some bare twigs. Girls are trained in "tea ceremony" and etiquette as well, training that bears fruit which even the most dull-witted visitor cannot overlook. One sometimes wishes that all Japanese men had similar training.

Another Japanese artistic achievement is the *Nō* drama, a sort of pantomime dance with text and music, which is

sufficiently esoteric to demand study for full appreciation. Among the original artistic accomplishments of the Japanese people, the *Nō* deserves serious attention from those interested in human efforts to express beauty.

The art of Japan is democratic as well as aristocratic. The humblest peasant stops work to repeat a poem in the presence of a gorgeous sunset. I have seen farm laborers pause and remove their hats in silent reverence when they suddenly emerged from a dense forest to behold a beautiful expanse of mountain and lake. When plums or cherries are in flower, no one feels the slightest shame at writing verses and pinning them to the trees. The memorizing of famous poems is a favorite household game.

The cottage of the peasant, dirty though it may be, blends harmoniously with its surroundings. The humblest farmer has an eye for the picturesque. The billboard has begun to desecrate the Japanese landscape, but the nation which nurtured that crime of civilization against nature can hardly criticize the Japanese for allowing the imported evil to spread.

The Japanese may not be born artists, but they have worthy traditions of beauty and appreciation of nature which develop all their native ability. Each child is taught drawing from the very beginning of his schooling, and even the mediocre develop a fair degree of skill. There is an unashamed seeking after beauty and sentiment which fosters artistic appreciation. Some of the worst architectural crimes

in Japanese cities are simply experiments, efforts of immature architects struggling with a new medium. Their struggles sometimes issue in beauty, and we have the consolation that Time will mercifully obliterate the failures. Such structures as the new library at Waseda, Japan's largest university, are destined to endure.

In the graceful lines of the finer Shinto shrines is architectural loveliness which can never perish: an ancient contribution to the world's store of beauty which is fortunately being adapted to modern materials and needs. Here again, simplicity is the keynote. Set in their quiet groves of evergreens, away from the roar of the city, and always entered beneath the up-sweeping curves of *torii* or shrine gateways, they seem to have caught and held fast the spirit of worship. Christians may be in advance of Shinto theology, but they can learn much from Shinto architects.

JAPANESE ARCHITECTURE HAS ABIDING CHARM

"THE DISHONEST JAPANESE"

"The Japanese are dishonest. They will skin you the moment your back is turned." So I was told in America.

Some of them are dishonest. Some of them will skin you if your back be turned. So will some Americans — quite a few, in fact.

Not all Japanese are dishonest. Once in Tokyo I sent a telegram. The clerk collected eighty *sen,* which seemed reasonable. After I had gone two blocks from the station, I heard an excited voice: "Say, you foreigner, wait a minute!" I waited, and here was the telegraph clerk. "You gave me the wrong amount," he proclaimed.

I had visions of a lengthy dispute, with this rascal trying to get more money. Instead he held out twenty *sen.* "You gave me too much — it was my mistake — I beg your pardon," he burst out breathlessly, and was off before I could thank him.

At another time I was waiting in Ueno station, then Tokyo's busiest railway terminal. A man and a woman, evidently working people, were conversing from opposite sides of the wicket, within which no person may enter save bona fide passengers about to embark. The woman's train was due to leave in three or four minutes; the man was remaining behind, and they were busily conversing in the interval. Suddenly there was great excitement; they had

discovered something wrong with her ticket. I moved closer to gather the drift of events from the conversation.

Who could straighten out the tangle? The conductor? He was somewhere on the train so soon to leave. The ticket agent? He was back in the ticket office. It would be impossible to see both before the train should start. Should the wrong one be consulted first, the train would pull out before the other important personage could be located. The man and his wife quickly agreed to seek both, the man going to the ticket office, the woman to the conductor. Suppose more money should be needed? The man would leave his purse on the railing beside the entrance gate. Either one could then make a flying trip for the needed funds. Away they went, leaving the purse on the railing.

"Here," I mused, "is an opportunity for a sneak thief. I'll wait and see what happens."

Dozens of people passed that purse. Almost all of them noticed it, and all went their way. In a moment the man returned, got some money, left the purse, and ran back to the ticket office. A few seconds before the train departed, the two returned to the gate, apparently satisfied with the outcome of their plan, and the woman made her connection in the nick of time.

Highway robbery, yeggery and big holdups are almost unknown. There are banks in Tokyo which — but why advertise their trust in human nature and thereby point out easy picking across the Pacific to American crooks? The

old myth about Japanese banks employing Chinese cashiers is so purely mythological that it does not deserve exploding. An American bank took it seriously some years ago when it opened a branch in Japan. It secured a well-recommended Chinese cashier and turned "the cage" over to him. They might as well have given him the bank in the beginning, for he ultimately got so much of its funds that the extent of the loss was never publicly announced. Since his day, a Japanese cashier presides in that cage, while the Chinese ex-cashier is in a different sort of cage, which never opens at night to let him go home.

Did I say that you will never be short-changed or cheated in Japan? Or advise anyone to leave a purse full of money unprotected in a Japanese railway station? If so I humbly apologize. Human nature is the same anywhere, and Japan has dishonest clerks, bold burglars and embezzlers, and pick-pockets galore, just as other nations. He who seeks Paradise in Japan will be disappointed, but he who looks for honest men will be rewarded, and that right early.

THE PEERLESS MOUNTAIN

Every schoolboy knows Japan's sacred mountain. He usually knows it by a Japanese name which is never used in Japan: "Fujiyama." *Yama* is Japanese for "mountain," and the word literally means "Mount *Fuji*"; but while "Fujiyama" is a good Japanese word, the people themselves always use another reading of the Chinese ideographs, calling the mountain *Fuji-san*.

In clear weather the white cone of Fuji greets the traveler while he is far out at sea. When he departs it bids him farewell with the same calm majesty. Japan, however, is not always bathed in sunshine; many a tourist spends weeks at the very foot of the mountain with scarcely a glimpse of the peak.

In late autumn or early winter, he who braves the train trip through countless smoky tunnels around to the north side will be rewarded for the discomforts of the journey. From this angle the shape of the peak is perfect, the smaller crater which breaks the symmetry on the south being invisible. At the same time the famous Five Lakes furnish a variety of picturesque settings. On calm mornings the mirrored reflection of Fuji, framed by ancient pine trees, will move the most hardened globe-trotter.

Ask a Japanese the height of Fuji and he recalls the figures by a simple trick. Write the number of months in the year,

then write after it the number of days, and there is the height in feet: 12,365. Although in our own Rockies peaks two thousand feet lower may be perpetually snow clad, the climate of Japan is such that in summer the snow virtually disappears from Fuji. Left thus naked and brown, the mountain almost merits the description offered by an unpoetic American salesman — "nothing but a big slag heap."

The mood of the beholder easily makes the difference between a slag heap and the Peerless Mountain. No readily accessible mountain of its height can approach Fuji in symmetry. For a thousand years Japanese song and story have celebrated its perfection. The slope of imposing temple roofs and the silhouette of the thatch on the peasant's cottage are alike inspired by Fuji. Not a home in Japan lacks some sort of representation of the mountain; no life is properly lived without at least one ascent to its summit. Thousands of pilgrims of both sexes and all ages toil up that weary trail in summer. A few are trapped by sudden storms or blown over precipices, but most of the multitude return. Bent old women and toothless grandfathers struggle up the steep incline as if life depended on it; there are always little children at the top, peering into the snow-filled crater.

Legend relates that Fuji rose from the plain in a single terrific night, while simultaneously the great depression which is now Lake Biwa was formed and began to fill with water. Biwa is three hundred miles away from Fuji! After a few of Japan's earthquakes and volcanic eruptions, one is

prepared to believe the legend. Fuji stands at the intersection of two of those great festoons of volcanoes which adorn the Pacific from Alaska to Australia. Anything might happen in such a place.

Fuji has erupted in historic times, though not recently. Hot springs and other signs of volcanic life abound in the vicinity. From being the terror of the countryside, the great Fuji has become a shrine for superstitious pilgrims, a dispenser of sulphur water to rheumatic old gentlemen.

The unique beauty of the Five Lakes forms a perfect setting for the Peerless Mountain. Once at sunrise I set out to cross Lake Kawaguchi in a sampan. Only the ripples from our boat disturbed the glassy waters. The little waves in our wake soon died out to make a mirror for the snowy peak. Wild ducks, cooling their feet in the lake after their southward flight, were the only visible living creatures. The surrounding mountains, clad in autumnal colors, the stillness and beauty of the morning, were food for the soul. We passed a village with its white-walled temple and grove of straight, tall cryptomerias. The village folk were just beginning to stir about, and smoke was rising straight up in the clear air from several houses. The far-off bark of a dog, the crow of a rooster, the soft, resonant, lingering boom of a temple bell, floated to us across the lake.

As the sun climbed higher, fleecy clouds drifted across the mountain, hiding it entirely as we reached the shore. Then we set out on a fourteen-mile hike past the second

lake and on to the third, Lake Shoji. At the first village we paused in a tea house for refreshment and rest. A village girl crept up, her curiosity regarding the foreigner getting the better of her fear of the white face. Then bursting into uncontrollable laughter, she fled precipitately. My Japanese companion, wondering what could be so amusing, pursued her and asked the reason, assuring her that the foreigner was perfectly harmless. "Oh," she gasped, "his face and blue eyes were queer enough, but I never thought foreign languages sounded so funny till he spoke to you! Please ask his pardon for my rudeness!"

Over a pass where the wind blew cold through a tunnel, along the shore of Saiko, the second lake, amid groves of pines, the road led our eager feet. While Fuji was hidden we drank in the beauty of lesser sights — lake and forest, fisherman's boat, and charcoal burner's hut.

The road zigzagged down the mountainside, through a dirty hamlet, and suddenly said good-bye to the lake for a long plunge into the forest. The land was a mass of volcanic boulders, showered forth from the mountain and piled together in titanic confusion. Nature had attempted to soothe the tortured mass; moss covered the stones and softened their ragged edges. Hoary trees, twisted and gnarled into grotesque shapes, thrust their tentacle-like roots into the crevices and gripped the big stones in an eternal embrace. The road was exceedingly bad, but we were on foot and the scenery paid us for the bad going.

At last we emerged amid fantastic masses of volcanic débris on the shore of Lake Shoji. The delicate curves of Fuji were standing forth, ever clearer above the breaking clouds.

That night we watched the last rays of reddened sunlight linger on the summit. In a short time we beheld a transformation. The inverted fan of the peak, so lately glowing like fire in the sunset, had turned to softest silver in the moonlight. Gathering mists hid the base of the mountain — it seemed a fairy cone of gleaming silver, floating over a sea of dark blue silk. Slowly it sank into that sea, as the mists rose, until even the moon itself was hidden from our eyes.

AMERICANIZATION

Back in 1920 we lived in the old castle town of Himeji, thirty-three miles from Kobe. Thirty-three miles meant about two hours on the train. Thus it happened that hunger drove me to the diner during one of those long-drawn-out rides to Kobe.

That diner was a remarkable vehicle. Eight small persons might eat there simultaneously. The menu included beefsteak, two lettuce leaves, a potato, all the liquor one might wish to purchase, and a concoction called by courtesy "salad."

After a perilous journey over the sprawling persons and labyrinthine baggage heaps in the aisles of two second-class coaches, I found the eight dining chairs already occupied. Being hungry and impatient of delay, I growled in English, "Full, as usual."

At that a young Japanese who had been picking his way over luggage and recumbent forms at the same time I had made my trip through the coaches, turned and said in well-modulated English: "It certainly is. I wonder how long we'll have to wait." Such fluency took my breath. In that part of Japan, "Where-are-you-going?" constitutes an extensive English vocabulary.

On the open platform of the next car we compared notes. He had spent some years in America as a salesman, and liked it immensely. A promotion had brought him back to Japan

to superintend a factory, but he confided the information that he did not relish the promotion, because he had become so much attached to America.

He was not the nose-on-the-grindstone, know-it-all type of business man. When at last we secured seats in the little diner, he pointed out historic places in the landscape, relating tales of their past in a way which revealed critical insight and a sympathetic study of history. His were not the doctored tales fed to school children by a paternal government, but illuminating glimpses of the past of a great people.

Before long he expressed a desire to talk with an American about the problems of Japan, the profound changes of life and thought which are taking place on every side: "I saw many things in America, and now Japan appears in a new light. America and Japan are very different; I wish I might talk things over with a serious-minded American." He was eager to glean the best from Japan's long history and turn it to account in the crisis of his own day. His experience abroad had made him keenly alive to Japan's faults, but he had also developed a profound sympathy with his people in their groping for better things.

I learned that he had refused the superintendency of a factory in the city and requested a rural post. Here he had time to delve into the history, literature, and life of his people. "Making money all the time is a dog's life, and there are better things than business," was his parting remark.

On my return trip I was musing on the refinement and vision of my new acquaintance when a flashily-dressed Japanese accompanied by a woman whose profession was as evident as it is ancient, dropped into the seat beside me and greeted me in English. At least it would have resembled English had he been less under the influence of liquor.

"You're 'n 'Merican, I c'n tell. Well, I'm a J'p'nese, an' wouldn't say it t' nobody else, but I tell y', ol' man, this 's a hell 'v a country, an' I'm goin' back to li'l ol' 'Nited States jus' soon 's th' dam' boat'll take me."

I learned that he had lived twelve years in Seattle and had come to revisit his native land. "I clean forgot J'pan was like this. Nothin' but dirt an' mud an' narrow streets an' stinkin' fish an' crying babies an' seat-hogs an' liars. Was would 'a gone back th' day I landed if all the dam' boats hadn' been full. Ol' 'Nited States 's good enough fer me!"

When I inquired if he had forgotten the Japanese language, his bibulous tongue took a new lease of life. "Ain't forgot it all, but it don' come right. I wouldn' say it t' no J'p'nese, but you're 'n ol' fren' — every 'Merican's 'n ol' fren' o' mine — 'n I tell yuh I can't write th' dam' stuff, I can't read th' dam' stuff, an' I don' wanna write ner read ner hear th' dam' stuff. English's good 'nuff fer me. All I wan' is t' go back to ol' U. S. an' live an' die an' be buried there an' never come back t' J'pan no more. I got fren's there an' have lots 'v good times — ain't no good times here —

this's a hell of a country!" This conclusion with alcoholic finality.

I hinted that prohibition might detract from the good times in the States. He thereupon delivered a lecture on the virtues of prohibition which would have been effective had his speech been less thick. That fact at length occurred to him, and with an apologetic wave he added: "Course I got few li'l bad habits, but prohibition's all right! J'pan oughtta have it too." Then he dilated on the evils of Japan's moral life, ending up with the vigor of one who is "half stewed": "T'ese bad girls are 'n awful thing. Ought t' be stopped, all of 'em. Bad f'r J'pan." Right at this juncture his "rented lady" squeezed his hand to offer him a freshly lighted cigarette to keep company with her own, but this never made a ripple on the flood of oratory.

Such may be the fruits of "Americanization." The first of these two men was a failure from the point of view of "Americanization." He did not want to be an American citizen; he loved Japan more for his experience abroad. His earnestness bordered on sublimity. The second man was "Americanized." Only a drunken American makes that particular kind of a fool of himself. All drunken men are equally foolish, but each breed has its own kind of alcoholic asininity. This man could never again be a Japanese, but his fellow Japanese would never learn anything about the truer America from him. He had mastered our hypocritical

prattle about reforming the other fellow, and had also learned to let the reformation end with talk.

A professor of economics in Japan's largest university once said to the writer: "When you teach your own corporations justice and treat your Negroes squarely, then you Americans might teach democracy and Christianity to the rest of us."

ODDS AND ENDS OF NEW JAPAN

Whether or not Japanese in America become Americanized, Japan herself is assiduously adopting American ways, despite anti-American oratory and jingo newspapers. Tokyo has an extensive and well-managed elevated railway system, and is passing through the throes of financing and digging a subway. The first section of the subway was opened to traffic in December, 1927, and the Tokyo boosters claim that it represents the last word in subway engineering. Since the earthquake, asphalt pavement is gradually getting the upper hand over the mud which has made Tokyo streets a byword.

A large crop of American-style soda fountains has lately sprung up on all sides. In the capital, the destruction of old refreshment places by the earthquake facilitated the importation of foreign equipment for a fresh start. Ice cream is everywhere on sale, though its quality is often dubious. The death of all the cows in the world might not affect the supply in the slightest. The finer places are quite like those in the States; their frozen treats bear the same meaningless names that grace American soda fountain menus.

Even the American drug store — to the disgust of our British cousins who cling to their "chemist's shops" — is becoming a Japanese institution, complete with soda fountain, cosmetics, patent medicines, radio parts, phonograph

records, films and developing, and all the rest of the familiar assortment. The radio and phonograph have come to stay: radio receiving sets are numbered by hundreds of thousands, while the phonograph blasts the happiness of many a once-quiet home.

The Japanese take to American institutions as ducks to water. From corner lot to professional match, baseball has won the nation's heart. Billboards remind the visitor that boxing has obtained a foothold. It is difficult to imagine a day when there was no tennis in Japan.

Electric advertising signs are everywhere — not yet entirely adapted to a language that is written vertically instead of horizontally, but still sufficiently imposing to open the mouths of the country cousins who go sight-seeing in the big cities.

Even women, supposedly the conservatives of the race, are slowly breaking away from *kimono* and wooden sandals and taking to bobbed hair and well-ventilated knees. No wonder that "flapper" has become a Japanese word.

The Japanese barber shop has its own ways. In a land of discomforts and high prices it is indeed a bright spot. One can get a haircut, a shampoo, a shave and a good scalp massage, plus all the smelly liquids he can stand, for less than an American quarter. The barber works in silence, using all the tools and equipment one would find in the Occident. That comes near to Paradise, especially the silence and the fact that he expects no tip.

In recent years wavy hair has become fashionable. I puzzled over the transformation of the uniformly straight black locks of my friends, who suddenly acquired real curls and waves. One day in a barber shop I met the answer to the riddle: curling irons! There they were, the real old-fashioned kind that is heated over the lamp, all sizzling hot and ready to put the wave in the hair of the stylish young Tokyo sport.

A mere American sits up in surprise when he sees a woman saunter into a barber shop and get a shave — a real shave, with brush, lather, and razor. Since bobbed hair robbed the American male of the one place where he might read the " Police Gazette " in peace, his only consolation has been that he could, if necessary, distinguish himself from the feminine patrons of the barber by getting his face shaved. But in Japan he has no such prerogative which women may not share. The ladies mount the chair as unconcerned as any man, and submit to the same lathering, scraping and steaming under hot towels. In fact they go the men one better, and often have eyelids, forehead and nose shaved. The explanation lies in the blackness of the tiny hairs on the face of the Oriental, which renders them conspicuous; hence ladies and even babies in the barber's chair.

There are other Western institutions which Japan has adapted to her own needs. American circus promoters have neglected the possibilities of the Japanese tram car. Even

transplanted to another land, with their precise sentences translated into a harsher tongue, the conductors of these vehicles should still be worthy of a laugh.

The cars themselves are of all styles, shapes, and sizes. There are little four-wheeled contraptions which bob along like teeter boards on wheels. There are big cars with doors in the middle and at both ends, with a conductor at each door and a motorman thrown in for good luck. Others have front and rear entrances and exits, with a conductor at the rear to punch tickets and coax erring trolley poles back to the overhead wires, and a shrill-voiced conductorette in front whose scarlet-trimmed uniform lends point to her remarks. Last and apparently least is a long-suffering motorman.

The crowd is as interesting — and irritating — as the car and its crew. Japanese passengers seem unable to endure the wait incidental to the exit of other straphangers. Invariably they pile on, bag and baggage, and then invariably have to dismount while those who have had enough fight their way to freedom. Old ladies stop on the bottom step and go through formal bows of greeting to some friend, while crowd and conductor may fret in vain till salutations are ended. Sharp wooden clogs on the feet of fellow travelers come so near to amputating one's toes that he who arrives home with his original ten finds no difficulty in believing in miracles. Just when one's wrath at the discourtesy and roughness of the other passengers reaches the boiling point, some one is sure to do something so eminently kind and

considerate that rage against things Japanese is transformed into grateful surprise.

The conductors are the star performers. A benevolent municipality provides two or three to each car. Their repertory is fixed, "by order" — it being reported that they are not permitted to say anything whatever unless it is in the words of the model sentences in their little rule books. Often there is a contest for a fitting new sentence. Signs in all the cars announce that free books of tickets will be awarded to the person proposing the best sentence for the use of conductors in such-and-such a situation. The winning sentence is added to the rule books and duly memorized by the conductors. If you land in the proper set of circumstances, you will surely meet it.

As it is now, one could scarcely expect the conductor to add any more talk to his performance. He is never still. While you wait in the mud of the street for debarking stragglers to extricate themselves from the tightly packed mass on the car, his cheery voice greets you —

"Wait a moment, please. The passengers-who-leave-the-car are about to get off." After they have scuffed away on their wooden shoes and no more appear to be getting off, he sings out: "Sorry to keep you waiting — please get on!"

No sooner are you aboard than he has a new song: "Move to the center of the car, please — there is much room at the center!" The center may be packed beyond the possibility of further compression, but the sentence is in the book and

may not be omitted. When all are on he calls: "Now the car is about to start. Hold tightly to a strap!" Should we approach a bend in the line, he is prepared for the emergency: "We are coming to a curve; hang on — do not fall!"

Meanwhile he has wriggled into the squirming mass of tightly packed humans and is dispensing tickets, commutation books, and transfers, talking steadily all the while: "Anyone else want a ticket? Are there honorable passengers whose tickets have not been cut? Don't fail to get a transfer now: does any other honorable passenger desire a transfer?"

Sometimes he is in a hurry, and then tickets and passengers may be dangerously mixed: "Now may I cut anyone else? Have I cut all the honorable passengers?"

We are approaching a cross street. "This stop is Kita-machi. Does any honorable passenger wish to get off? Here we are at Kita-machi!" As the departing ones elbow their way to the door, he has another exhortation: "Have you forgotten any of your honorable things? Please look carefully: I beg you, do not forget anything!"

The last one hears of the car is the shrill voice of the conductor, or perhaps the shriller voice of the conductorette: "Are you sure you have not forgotten something? All aboard — sorry to cause you to wait — Sakanamachi next!"

STOP! GO!

The Japanese traffic policeman is learning his profession. Some years ago, when the first ones appeared in Tokyo, they furnished much amusement for foreigners who were accustomed to the genuine article. But the days of amateur traffic regulation are past.

One day, at a busy Tokyo intersection, I heard an imperious whistle, followed by a sharp command which might be freely interpreted:

"Hey, you on the bicycle — where y' goin'? Get off and come here!"

I looked up in time to see the "cop" in charge of the corner grab a youth from his wheel. The victim donned a silly grin, took off his hat, bowed and begged pardon, but that did not pacify the guardian of the crossing.

"What's the matter with you? Can't you read? What does that sign say?"

The youth admitted that it said "Stop."

"Well, why didn't you stop? You're too fresh. You need a lesson. You act as if you just came from the backwoods and never saw a traffic sign before. Come with me — I'll give you some lessons."

The policeman grabbed the handlebar of the bicycle and started a journey around the four corners. There were four other "cops," one for sidewalk traffic at each intersection, and when the pair reached the first one, the personal

conductor of the tour commanded: "Halt! Salute!" The bicyclist, grin all gone, humbly saluted.

"Now, you hick, what does that sign say?"

"It says 'Go.'"

"Then go!" And with a tremendous yank, the policeman led his charge across to the second corner, while the crowd stopped to laugh.

"Now here's another policeman. Halt! Salute!"

He saluted, badly scared.

"Look at that sign. Don't take your eyes off it. What does it say?"

"It says 'Stop.'"

"Then you *stop!* Stay here, and don't you move till it changes!"

The instant it changed to "Go," the handlebars got another yank, and the intersecting street was crossed. Three round trips of the corners were made, accompanied by an uninterrupted "bawling out" which would turn an American traffic policeman green with envy. At each corner the boy had to salute the officer on duty there. Finally he seemed thoroughly subdued, and the policeman demanded:

"Now do you know what that sign is for?"

"Yes," very meekly.

"Then get out of here, and hurry up. Next time you get funny you will have a night in jail to think about it."

The bicyclist vanished in the traffic. Who says the Japanese traffic cop is not the real thing?

EVERY 'RIKISHA HAS HIS DAY

Progress has not neglected the jinrikisha. It has long since acquired bicycle-style wheels, ball bearings, and pneumatic tires. But the latest innovation gave me a start.

Tokyo traffic is no place for a nervous person. Between big motor trucks, oxcarts, bicycles with side cars and trailers, old women with babies on their backs, dogs, baseball games in the street, motorcycles, hand-power sprinkling carts, congenital jay-walkers, and taxicabs which regard neither man, God, nor devil, the 'rikisha man gets the worst of it. He is only one-man-power, can turn easily, and will hurt no one he may run into. So people pay no attention to his shouts and bell, and he must dodge through wherever he can find an opening.

One Sunday morning I rode forth in a 'rikisha, and we got the road. I noticed nothing unusual about the vehicle until something got in the way, and then bedlam broke loose. The din came from beneath me, and I stood straight up in surprise. People ahead jumped to right and to left without looking to see what was coming. Then they assumed that well-known look of injured dignity which pedestrians in the States wear when they jump out of the way for a big Klaxon only to discover that it is attached to a flivver.

After the second outburst I discovered the source of the din. The ingenious 'rikisha man had secured a gong, similar

to that on a fire engine, and fastened it under the seat. Then he made a friction roller which, when he pulled a string, pressed on the rim of the 'rikisha wheel. A dozen metal rings were loosely attached to the shaft of the friction wheel, with a discarded steel nut on each ring. When the string was pulled, centrifugal force made those nuts fly out and deliver a rapid fire tattoo on the bell. Words are inadequate — it should be seen and heard to be appreciated.

Suffice it to say that he cleared the road. When he turned that racket loose, folks jumped for two blocks ahead. Then they glared at the jinrikisha and its embarrassed passenger till they moved out of range.

A jitney bus stopped to discharge passengers. The gong sounded, and its driver stepped on the gas and made for the side of the road — to let the fire engine pass. An oxcart crawled along, secure in confident possession of the whole road. One brazen screech from my 'rikisha and the driver whipped up the ox and made for a side street.

Four policemen, resplendent with shining swords, were strolling down the middle of the street a few blocks further on. My 'rikisha chauffeur came silently up and then, about four feet behind the guardians of the law, pulled his string. Never did Law and Order act more promptly. Swords streamed out behind the scattering "cops"; I thanked my lucky stars that they had enough sense of humor to laugh when they saw the source of the din. This ride was growing in interest.

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After the second outburst I discovered the source of the din. The ingenious 'rikisha man had secured a gong, similar

to that on a fire engine, and fastened it under the seat. Then he made a friction roller which, when he pulled a string, pressed on the rim of the 'rikisha wheel. A dozen metal rings were loosely attached to the shaft of the friction wheel, with a discarded steel nut on each ring. When the string was pulled, centrifugal force made those nuts fly out and deliver a rapid fire tattoo on the bell. Words are inadequate — it should be seen and heard to be appreciated.

Suffice it to say that he cleared the road. When he turned that racket loose, folks jumped for two blocks ahead. Then they glared at the jinrikisha and its embarrassed passenger till they moved out of range.

A jitney bus stopped to discharge passengers. The gong sounded, and its driver stepped on the gas and made for the side of the road — to let the fire engine pass. An oxcart crawled along, secure in confident possession of the whole road. One brazen screech from my 'rikisha and the driver whipped up the ox and made for a side street.

Four policemen, resplendent with shining swords, were strolling down the middle of the street a few blocks further on. My 'rikisha chauffeur came silently up and then, about four feet behind the guardians of the law, pulled his string. Never did Law and Order act more promptly. Swords streamed out behind the scattering "cops"; I thanked my lucky stars that they had enough sense of humor to laugh when they saw the source of the din. This ride was growing in interest.

Through all this the motive power of my chariot trotted along unmoved. Not a smile — never a flicker on the impassive Oriental countenance to tell that anything unusual was going on. But I'll wager my few possessions that when he returned to his stand, he and his fellow charioteers rocked back and forth on their heels with laughter at the thought of the fleeing policemen.

BURNING UP WITH TOKYO

Japan lays claim to some of the biggest things in the world — the greatest brewery, the highest divorce rate, the largest battleship, the most disastrous earthquakes, and last but not least, the most sweeping and frequent conflagrations.

Tokyo is always prepared for fire. That is, people take it for granted that a good part of the city will burn up each winter. The fire demons are not averse to atoning for any wintertime lapses by a good sweeping blaze in the summer. Even in fiery Japan, Tokyo has held the lead for centuries in the number and size of its conflagrations. "Bigger and Better Fires" would almost seem to be a civic ideal, so much so that hundreds of years ago the conflagrations were nicknamed "The Flowers of *Yedo.*" *Yedo,* as the city used to be called, burned up regularly every few years, and in the interim burned in spots, just to keep the home fires burning.

The constant rebuilding supported, and still supports, an army of carpenters and lumber dealers. After each fire, building materials soar in price, and the gang "makes hay" while the embers die. During the Tokugawa period the carpenters' guild was rightly accused of helping business in dull seasons by starting fires on its own account.

Long ago a clever *shōgun,* or regent, conceived the scheme of having regular firemen instead of volunteers — these regulars to be companies of sturdy men, recruited and drilled

like soldiers. They made their work into an elaborate ceremonial, and the mysteries of the profession were handed down from father to son. There was keen competition among the companies. Each had its emblem, and to be chosen standard bearer of one's company was an honor, though it meant certain death.

The standard bearer planted the company's emblem on the ridge of the burning building. All too often the fire won the battle and he burned to death rather than face disgrace by abandoning a position once taken. Losing is the real shame, says Japan: win at any cost. He who would deal successfully with Japanese needs to remember this principle: never put a Japanese in a position which will necessitate his backing down from a stand he has once taken. If you always provide a graceful exit for him when needed, you will live long and happily in the land. The old spirit is not dead, within or without the ranks of fire companies. They say that standard bearers still prefer death to retreat, but I cannot prove that tale.

The fireman is at a tremendous disadvantage. Streets are narrow and winding. I have lived on a magnificent boulevard nine feet wide and surfaced with six inches of mud the year round. Houses are of the flimsiest construction, and for blocks are built eave to eave without an open space. Till the advent of the motor fire engine, and even yet in places, the only thing to do is to estimate the speed of the fire, pick out a house far enough away so that it can be

torn down or dynamited before the fire arrives, and go to work. When the houses up to the gap have burned, you may with good luck stop the demon.

Even now there is no automatic fire-alarm system. When your house catches fire, run for the police box, which may be five blocks away. On arrival there, remove your hat and recite something like this:

"I am Suzuki. It is very rude of me, but I beg to announce that my house is on fire."

Out comes the policeman's notebook. What was the name? Where do you live? What is your age? When did the fire start? If these questions are properly answered, the guardian of the law takes steps to inform the fire department. Nowadays the telephone has speeded things up and even the questions may be cut shorter. In the good old times, which in Tokyo ended with the Earthquake, the firemen got a little hand pump, sometimes on wheels and sometimes carried on their shoulders, while those not needed to transport the pump grabbed bamboo ladders and paper lanterns, and off they went, standard bearer and all. One member stayed behind to climb the wooden tower and pound the gong.

It doesn't pay to have a fire in Japan. First of all, if it has its origin in your house, you may be liable to a fine for endangering the city. Wherever it starts, the smoke barely clears away when acquaintances begin to pour in from all sides to offer condolences. Etiquette requires one to sit

on the ruins as though at home in a new mansion, and serve all with tea and cakes. By the time one's credit at the confectioner's is exhausted, the policeman is there with his trusty notebook, asking a list of personal questions which would make a U. S. customs man jealous. If one must have a fire, some place other than Japan would offer a better opportunity to enjoy it in peace.

The authorities carry on a vigorous poster campaign against fire. It is needed. Workingmen build bonfires anywhere. It is a common sight to see carpenters warming themselves about a blazing pile of shavings and odds and ends, right inside the house where they are working. Kitchen stoves are not stoves at all. Sticks of wood are placed in a clay box and a huge dish of rice boils on top. Sparks fly in all directions.

The family bath is made in a wooden tub with a copper device in one end. In this copper container a fire is built; the water is warmed by direct contact with the container. Here again sparks fly and embers drop to the wooden slats beneath. Sometimes a careless maid builds the fire before filling the tub with water, and that means another run for the fire brigade. Despite strict regulations and endless inspections, electric wiring is often carelessly done. Rats are legion in Japan, and fires would be still more numerous were there friction matches for them to gnaw. As it happens, the law prohibits all matches except the safety kind which light on the box alone. There is always the careless

smoker to do his bit to keep the Flowers of *Yedo* in constant bloom.

The only reason that fire losses in Japan do not far exceed those of America is that buildings are so flimsy that a thousand houses may burn with little more loss than a single big warehouse blaze may occasion in the United States, in so far as dollars measure loss. The people, in Buddhist style, simply say "It is Fate," sigh, drink more tea, and erect more flimsy structures.

As one flood victim observed years ago when we were looking at the spot where his house had stood and his family had perished: "Next time I'll build a cheaper house. They are sure to be destroyed anyway!" There speaks the old Orient, unchanged by the rattle of machinery and the buzz of aeroplanes.

WHEN THE GODS GO A-RIDING

For some days there has been an air of bustle and preparation in the neighborhood. Paper lanterns with the sun-flag emblem hang at every gate and doorway; paper strips, cut zigzag fashion and suspended at intervals from long strands of straw rope, warn the demons away from every entrance or shop door.

A vacant store has been screened off from curious eyes and some mysterious activity is taking place within its precincts: the children gather and peek excitedly into the cracks of the screen. In front of the shrine, workmen are erecting an elevated platform, gay with red and white bunting and flags.

At last the day of the festival dawns; it is the *O-matsuri* of the neighboring shrine. Little booths, similar to the sidewalk shops of the "night shows," line the streets near the shrine. Merchandise of every sort may be purchased by the throngs who wander from booth to booth. The big drum at the shrine booms forth intermittently, adding to the feeling that the great day is here.

The mystery has gone from the once vacant store. The screens have disappeared, revealing to the visitor a picture of loveliness. An exhibit of the neighborhood's best talent in arranging flowers is a thing of beauty, though its transient nature may not make it a joy forever. Each dwarf tree, each vase of carefully harmonized blossoms or budding twigs

bears the name, in large Chinese characters, of the artist whose deft touch has arranged it.

The elevated platform in front of the shrine gate proves to be an impromptu stage where the neighborhood fun-makers or amateur dramatic talent amuse the crowds all day long. There are strange mythical creatures, gods and goddesses, clowns and buffoons, all going through their fantastic acts to win the laughter or applause of the populace. The crowd itself is as interesting as the show: old men leading eager-eyed little children in their holiday best; mothers, to whose backs are tied babies, endlessly chewing "pacifiers" while the mothers gossip; apprentice boys who lean on their bicycles and gaze open-mouthed, forgetful of the scoldings which await them from impatient employers — all sorts and conditions of men are there, even to the dignified university professor who pauses to laugh with the coolies and nursemaids. Who said Japan was not democratic?

Inside the shrine grounds, members of the Young Men's Association are busily preparing for the "god's" tour of the district. The *mikoshi,* a sort of portable shrine carried on the shoulders of fifteen or twenty men, is being taken out of its shed and made ready. The priests in their robes are going through appropriate mummery. The young men wear white garments, suspiciously like those of the gentleman whose underwear decorates the magazine advertisements. Towels or colored cloths tied about their foreheads keep the hair from their eyes. There is plenty of *saké*

for the thirsty; the hilarity shows no trace of a dim religious air.

Now all is ready: the young men raise the *mikoshi* to their shoulders and begin to move, shouting a rhythmic chant in time to the deep boom of the big drum. There is plenty of noise; the youths who cannot directly bear the *mikoshi,* crowd around it, pushing and milling this way and that. All have consumed enough *saké* to make progress a bit unsteady. The belief is that, once started, the god himself guides the car, and its bearers are powerless to control its movements. The bearers are certainly close to the point where they cannot control their own movements, but just how much of the erratic wandering of the *mikoshi* is due to the god is open to question.

Down the street they go, swaying and turning. The bearers yell a wild chant at the top of their voices; the crowds join in the din, and the god has a merry ride. Woe to the man who has incurred the ill will of the deity! The god will, in all probability, direct his wobbly but heavy throne against the fence or dwelling of the offender. Few Japanese houses can withstand such an onslaught from a one- or two-ton *mikoshi.* Such acts of vengeance on the part of wandering gods have so often resulted in fatalities as well as destruction of property, that in these latter days, two or three solemn-faced policemen with shining swords follow the noisy mob to keep the god in the straight and narrow path. Now and then the bearers rest, setting the god-car down

A GOD GOES RIDING

THE BOYS BRING LIQUID REFRESHMENT

while they imbibe the offerings of the pious. The pious provide the god with liberal potations of *saké*. The god being forced to decline with thanks, the bearers put down the *mikoshi* and dispose of the *saké* on his behalf. This makes his progress increasingly noisy and unsteady as the day goes on.

After the main procession has passed, the small boys appear with their contribution. They carry some object or other just as their older brothers carry the big *mikoshi;* sometimes they have a little *mikoshi,* resplendent with gilt and tinsel like its larger original; sometimes a papier-maché model of Mount Fuji, and often simply a decorated tub of *saké*. The prohibition law which forbids drinking by minors is suspended on festival days.

At night there are tableaux and pantomime performances by the priests or others at the shrine. The children often "speak pieces" or give graceful little posture dances. Finally the god-car is put away, the drums cease their steady beat, and the lights go out. The god may rest in peace till the next *O-matsuri*.

WHEN A FLIVVER IS NOT A FLIVVER

In childhood days I often wondered how Jacob and his mother managed so perfectly to fool Isaac as to win Esau's birthright. But it can be done: the demonstration met my own eyes and ears on a Tokyo street.

I was strolling peacefully along one of those gravelly thoroughfares, dodging flying bicycles whose riders balanced on their shoulders commodities ranging from a sack of grain to a pair of automobile tires. Quietly I picked my way through the usual assortment of barking dogs, children playing hop-scotch, and old women throwing muddy water on the dusty spots between the gravel patches. Oxen plodded along, dragging creaking wagons laden with stone; 'rikisha pullers yelled at the babies in the middle of the street. Suddenly my meditations were interrupted by the voice of the vehicle that made Detroit famous. When it passed, I rubbed my eyes in surprise. This was no flivver — it was a big limousine of a high-priced make.

Gradually the truth dawned. The limousine body projected a foot or so beyond the rear axle. Under its ample curves I detected the faithful wheels and springs that always identify Henry's product. The car was a mongrel! The hands were the hands of Esau, but the voice was Jacob's. Isaac's blindness prevented him from discovering that the skin did not fit Jacob, but for one with eyes and ears, no

amount of five-thousand-dollar body can conceal the chassis of "Model T."

In Japan the automobile is strangely beset. It is taxed beyond all reason. The Tokyo municipal tax on a flivver is over two hundred (U. S.) dollars annually, and is proportionately higher for larger cars. Consequently the streets are filled with queerly assorted vehicles, designed to dodge taxes and still locomote. Little French, German and British cars puff valiantly through the mud and dust. They cling so closely to the ground that on a windy day the pedestrian never knows when one of these gasoline insects will dart forth from the ever-present dust clouds at his very feet. The freak of freaks is a tiny electric gocart that passes for a taxi. The driver sits in the front seat and blows the horn. If he be slim enough to enter at all, the passenger occupies the rear seat, hidden behind a huge taximeter.

Tokyo ordinances require every car to carry an old-style horn with a big rubber bulb and a long tube. The honk is never stilled.

On rainy days, all motor cars, great and small, blossom out with contraptions on each hub that resemble nothing more than a long, thin scrubbing brush in moulting season. The purpose of these devices remains concealed until their history is known. The tale runs as follows:

The police, like other folks in Japan, don white garb in summer. Some sensible, not to say lucky, persons wear nothing — they have by far the best of it. Police regulations set

the date for the change of uniforms from blue to white; warm or cold, rain or shine, the white uniforms appear on May fifteenth.

Back in the days when automobiles were few, Tokyo's dignified chief of police was standing on a street corner. His person was resplendent in a brand-new white uniform, with gleaming sword and yards of shiny gold braid. A passing motorist splashed all over the new uniform a generous portion of the thin mud soup that covers Tokyo's streets.

Did he swear? No — his language will not permit that luxury. A Japanese can call a man a beast, or a monkey: he can be too polite, if thoroughly aroused — but one cannot paint the air blue in American fashion.

At home the chief nursed his wrath. Then he drafted a new traffic regulation. Henceforth every automobile must be equipped with an approved splash guard over each wheel, to protect pedestrians. Now, when it rains, the approved splash guards blossom forth. Sometimes they whirl round and round with the wheel, sometimes they trail along in the wind, never do they prevent the splash — but the rule is in the book, and that's that.

Rumor hath it, in the public press, that the chief has long since resigned from the force, but that he is comfortable for life from the proceeds of a splash-guard concern of which he is President.

Now in *our* country . . . !

"GO SLOW" IN TOKYO

In Japan, street-car workers are not allowed to strike. They have, nevertheless, their own way of getting results. He who sought to travel on Tokyo's trams in a certain week of November, 1924, learned that a strike is not always a strike — it is sometimes "Go slow."

The speed of Tokyo's street cars never did take one's breath away; but in that week a micrometer was the only instrument capable of measuring their progress. The electric bureau, which controls the municipal tramways, and the employees of the lines were engaged in settling their differences. The employees demanded a twenty per cent increase in salary, and larger bonuses and retirement allowances.

On Sunday the newspapers carried one of the first intimations of trouble when they announced that the workers had "virtually" won their demands; that the head of the bureau had granted the salary increase, while the question of bonuses and special allowances remained unsettled.

Those who tried to use the trolley cars that day entertained no illusions that the trouble had been "settled." It had evidently just begun. The men, being prevented by law, strictly enforced, from striking, were nevertheless getting the same result. Every man was on his job. The cars were loaded with the usual struggling crowd, although no one

was getting anywhere. The trolley poles seemed bewitched: they refused to stay on the wires, which kept the conductors busy, because Tokyo cars have each two trolley poles, running on two separate overhead wires. Motors seemed to have been connected with Satan's own workshop. They gave out on the slightest pretext and even at best would produce barely enough power to move the car at a crawl.

Each car seemed determined to stop squarely in the middle of every crossing, and to go off the track at every switch. Split switches became the rule; the wrecking crews spent their whole time clearing up the resulting débris. Even the wrecking crews seemed to have a steady run of bad luck — their motor trucks would upset, spilling tools and equipment all over the streets, and they would reach the job only to discover that the tools most needed for that particular kind of work had been left at the barn, or borrowed by some other crew. Conductors leisurely passed out transfers to groups of disembarked passengers, the cars waiting till this long process was completed before making preparations to move on.

The sight of a cat crossing the street a hundred feet ahead was enough to cause a motorman to jam on the emergency brakes and dismount to aid the dear little feline in reaching her destination safely. The cars speedily became gregarious, coming in bunches of eight or ten; they could not seem to endure the idea of traveling alone. I rode a mile in just an hour by jumping off each time we caught another car and

grabbing the one ahead. I finished the journey twenty-two cars ahead of the one on which I began the trip. Strike? Oh no, everything as usual, thank you!

The public growled and raged — then they began to snicker and the word went around, *sabotte imasu,* which is a Japanese adaptation of the word " sabotage." It is used in a slightly different sense from the original, as in Japan it means nothing more than " lying down on the job." Most people seemed to be wishing good luck to the men. After the first day the public took inconveniences as a matter of course.

In the middle of the week the car service suddenly went back to normal. There was no strike. All's well that ends well. But there was a grin of satisfaction on the face of the conductor as he took tickets. " The Oriental is so placid and has such wonderful self-control " — just the same, he gets what he goes after.

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN JAPAN

Ever since the "Letters of a Japanese Schoolboy" tickled the American sense of humor by showing the funny side of Japan's passion for English, the Occident has been vaguely aware of a vigorous interest in that language among the people of the Land of the Rising Sun. Few Westerners realize how profoundly Japan is being altered and remade by influences which come with the English tongue.

One letter out of thousands comes to hand and deserves notice — there is a deadly earnestness about it:

My dear Mr. Haring —

A pretty number of days has already passed since I saw you last, but I hope you are well. to myself, I am very well nowadays, but I have nothing to do, for now it is our vacation. Though I attend the English Class at . . . every Monday and Friday, I can not satisfy my vehement love for English conversation. My affection for it is all aflame, I dare say. So would you kindly find me an opportunity to fill up my mind hope? I want to borrow a room from some foreigner — a room only, I don't mean to eat with him — but if it is impossible, I want to learn English every day except Sunday of course.

Have you no such foreigner in your memory? If you know such foreigner, for God's sake let me know as soon as possible. For I can scarcely pass a day without speaking English with foreigner. Please write to me if you are not so busy. Remember to all.

Yours sincerely —

I. I . . .

The ambitious student doubtless worked a long time over that phrase, "For God's sake," and the Sunday allusion, thinking that these signs of piety would appeal to the Christian.

The "vehement love for English conversation" which is "now all aflame" is to some extent typical of Japanese students. To them English is the gateway to a new world, a world where newspapers and magazines are not compiled under the watchful eye of the censor — a world where great ships bear the trade of many nations, and where delving scientists emerge from their laboratories bearing the chains with which to bind Nature. English opens the gates of Fairyland.

For over a generation Japan has enforced the teaching of English in middle and higher schools. The student usually learns enough to enable him to read easy books, but only rarely does he get beyond "Goo-do mornin-gu" in conversation. Even this slight contact with that other world is making a new Japan. Just before the close of the World War, "democracy" was still a forbidden word. Today it is common property. Then labor unions were impossible. Today they meet openly, and the whole nation watches the meetings of the Federation of Labor with interest.

The Department of Education has long followed the lead of militaristic bureaucrats. Only in recent years has it begun to escape from their domination. From the start, they have sown the seeds of their own downfall by allowing the

study of English. The English language, vehicle of thought of the world's great democracies, is an intellectual storehouse that holds the anti-bureaucratic traditions of the British Isles, the Dominions, and the United States. It has brought a flood of new ideas which, in the end, will be too powerful for Japan's bureaucracy. It is also bringing a compensating factor: the idea of orderly evolutionary change. The British tradition of peaceful parliamentary changes is now in open conflict with the Russian dogma of class conflict, revolution, and class rule. Which will gain the mastery over Japan's life remains to be seen, but the force of the English language and its atmosphere are as strongly against red revolution as they are against militaristic bureaucracy.

English is actually the leaven in Japan's body politic. By her method of writing, she is as completely shut off from the outer world as ever China was isolated behind her Great Wall. In the schools the youth of the nation are glimpsing, through English books, the lands beyond Japan's Great Wall — a truly Chinese wall, for it is made of ideographs.

English has become the world language of commerce, science, and diplomacy. Japan and Russia make their new treaties in English; Japan and China forsake picture writing, and their diplomats talk to each other in English and make agreements in that language.

No wonder Japan's students exhibit a "vehement love" for English and seek — "for God's sake" — opportunities to "fill up" their "mind hope!"

SIGNS — BUT NOT TO BELIEVE IN

Let those who believe in signs come to Japan.

The possibilities of the English language in Japanese hands are limitless. It is fashionable in Japan to have an English sign on one's shop, just as in some parts of the English-speaking world French signs or menus or what not are considered just a bit high-class. The Japanese shopkeeper usually produces his gems with the aid of a dictionary, and literal translations of Japanese advertising phrases, together with misspellings, do the trick.

Perhaps of all the irreparable losses resulting from the great earthquake, that of the famous near-English signs of Tokyo and Yokohama did the most to sadden the foreign residents of those cities. The old-time gems still persist in memory, and the following were among the best known:

"Ladies' Furs Made from Their Own Skins"

"Whale and All Relating It Are Sold Here" (Whalebone shop)

"Ladies Have Fits Upstairs" (Tailor shop. They did!)

"Oxen Bought and Retailed" (Cattle market)

"Tokyo Milk Manufacturing Co." (Dairy)

"Manicure of Corne, Bunion, & etc." (Chiropodist)

"Corporation Society of Vegitable, Eggs, Furits, Foods & etc." (Grocery Store)

"Cleaning of Ladies and Gents" (Dry cleaner)

"Kids For Brightening the Home Than Untold Golds" (Toy shop)

PATENT BAS & BOIRARS
BATHE-KETTLE AND BAISON
WITH NO HAND TROUBLENESS

(Bath-tub and water-heater dealer)

But sad as may be the thought that these old-time gems are gone beyond the reach of the tourist's camera, the loss is partly atoned for by the new crop which has sprung up with reconstruction days. The first to appear, located on a prominent down-town corner in Tokyo, ran as follows:

MATSUZAWA HARMONICA SPECIFIC FIRM

Investigation revealed the fact that Mr. Matsuzawa was engaged in the sale of the humble mouth organ.

Then, in rapid succession, the sign painters produced the following:

"Superlative Water to Drink — Nourishment Cakes" (Restaurant)

"Tailor to take up an order" (Clothes made to order)

"The Special Shoe for Gentleman"

"All kind cakes here" (So we hope! But what's in a sign?)

"Paradise Barber"

"Head Cutting of Gentleman" (Another barber — more frank about it)

During a sale in a large department store, the outside of the building bore this legend:

WHY GO UNWASHED?

OUR GOODS
WORLDLY APPLAUSED

Neatly lettered in gold on the plate-glass window of a prominent tobacconist's shop is this:

TOBACCO PIPE AND ITS SISTERS

Never to be outdone is the signboard erected near a summer resort where many Americans and Canadians stay, calling attention to the remarkable emporium of a country general store keeper:

DESCRIPTION OF BUSINESS
medical assistant dealer
in drugs and patent
medicines tailed articles
food stuffstinned goods
battled drinks soap paper
pens inks
etc etc

A
mercantile house
TORAKICHI NAKAYAMA
furuma-nakamachi

This wonder is executed in red, white, and blue, and while I have never visited Nakamachi in the town of Furuma, it

arouses great expectations for Mr. Nakayama's versatile establishment. I am curious about the "tailed articles": are they monkeys; are they fish from the Japan sea; or simply prosaic oxen, or perhaps oxtail soup? Or did he mean to say "retailed"? "Battled drinks" sounds like the stock in trade of some American bootlegger rather than that of a Japanese country store. Still I doubt not the accuracy of the description of the effect on the consumer.

To one who reads Japanese, a still more interesting world of signs stands forth on every side, especially when English and other foreign words have been lifted bodily into the somewhat clumsy Japanese syllabary. For a year or more I was puzzled by the signs in railway stations, which, in Japanese, speak of the "steam-train home" or the "electric-car home." Could it be that a thoughtful paternal government had provided homes for its aged and feeble rolling stock? Or were these merely places like the modern apartment, designed for tired trains to eat, listen to the radio, and sleep in, too small to turn around in? At last the light dawned. The Japanese often adopt English words and then shorten them for convenience's sake. This puzzling word "home" had originally been "platform." In Japanese syllables, "platform" becomes "pu-ra-to-ho-mu" — surely a mouthful for the train caller. By dropping the first three syllables, it became "ho-mu," pronounced as we pronounce "home." The secret was out!

One enterprising phonograph manufacturer took a

well-known American trade-mark, that of the dog listening to His Master's Voice, and improved upon it for Japanese use. For the familiar dog, he substituted Buddha, no longer wrapped in age-long contemplation, oblivious to desire and happiness alike, but wide awake, grinning, hand at ear to catch every faintest strain from the phonograph beside him. To the seeing observer, that picture is more than an advertisement for the Nippon-o-phone — it is an epitome of the awakening Orient.

At Nojiri Lake a picturesque island is adorned by a Government Shinto shrine. One arrives by rowboat to find the following sign greeting him at the pier:

All person are forbidden

1. To pick or injure tree and flower
2. To bring dog or dangerous animal
3. To ride on horseback or in carriage etc

BY ORDER

Just why it was necessary to forbid riding on horseback or in carriages when the island, like all proper islands, was entirely surrounded by water, remained unexplained till I discovered a line of sunken piles between the island and the shore, indicating that a bridge had once made horseback riding on the island a possibility. Year in and year out, humorless officials had perpetuated the sign, though the bridge had been long forgotten. Perhaps all officials are humorless, otherwise they would seek different employment!

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Japan would be poorer and duller without her English signs. In a land where rigid propriety is so much in evidence, these lapses from meticulous precision are a blessed relief. That so many gems of the first water might have a common origin is unbelievable; still, in down-town Tokyo there stands a gaily painted shop that offers a clue to their source. Its gaudy sign announces:

SUNRISE SIGN & CO.
ENGLISH ARE USED

THE MELANCHOLY STUDENT

" Sir, I am your admiration. I will come and live with you. I eagerness to learn."

I turned and gazed upon a smiling Japanese in a gray uniform with blue patches and brass buttons. Whoever he might be, he had a startling proposition. His cap, originally square and smart, had long ago lost its shape. Under the influence of sun and rain, it had faded to a sad gray and parted with half its visor. He looked ill fed. Unconsciously I began estimating his appetite.

" I am a student of university and in poverty. I am very gloomy and melancholy. Perhaps I shall suicide. I believe the Schopenhauer. If I live with you I shall not so gloomy."

Cheerful prospect, this! What was it all about?

The boy was not crazy. He was a type — before the end of the World War one might have said *the* type — of Japanese student.

To understand him and his " nerve," and perhaps also his gloom and contemplated suicide, one must needs retrace his steps to the days before the white man rudely tapped Japan on the shoulder and called: " Tag! You're it! If you want to be civilized, catch me! " whereupon Japan threw away most of an ancient, beautiful culture to give the white man a run for his money.

Our student visitor was a remnant of the old order. To

those familiar with ancient Japanese customs, there was nothing brazen in his request. In those far-off days when Japan was content with her old culture and unworried over "civilization," schools were not operated on production schedules like factories. There were few institutions which we should class as schools. There were temple schools, where warriors, weary of strife, might become monks and pore over Buddhist classics. In that cloistered seclusion, refugee sons of defeated feudal lords might learn the "eightfold path of virtue" during their tender years. At maturity, they might emerge to wreak vengeance upon the enemies of their families. On the whole, however, education depended on subtler, more intimate methods.

When a man became known as a scholar, youths athirst for learning would one by one present themselves at his door and request the privilege of living with him. Failing after repeated efforts, they sometimes committed suicide. Once accepted, they became members of his family, sharing equally in his trials and privations, his food and his pleasures. Payment for the instruction was farthest from the thoughts of all concerned. Had not the sages of old taught that a teacher gives one the life of the soul, which is an even greater gift than the life of the body received from one's father? How can such a gift be measured in money? Indeed, should both father and teacher be trapped in a burning building, the righteous youth would save the teacher first. To offer oneself as a pupil is thus a delicate compliment.

These communal households produced men worthy of the name. The boys learned things which never were in books; they shared every phase of life with their teacher. He gave them strength of mind and fineness of soul: they literally absorbed character from him.

How could such households maintain themselves? First of all, needs were simple. The simplicity of Japanese culture is the crowning attainment of a sophisticated, deliberate civilization, not the ignorant simplicity of undeveloped folk. In Old Japan poverty was a proudly worn badge of gentility. It still persists as an attribute of respectability, and men in public life like to point to a lack of worldly goods as proof of fitness for office. Students continue the tradition of poverty, partly from necessity, partly from the force of student tradition, everywhere a most conservative guardian of the folkways. Students not actually poor are often scrupulously careful not to wear clothes which look new, clean, or well pressed. Keio University, proud of democracy and modernity, is, with its frankly well-groomed students, the exception which proves the rule. One of the proudest colleges in Japan leads the majority by clinging to its tradition of old clothes and dirt. One *kimono* or uniform must serve a student from the day he enters until he graduates; if it be old to begin with, so much the better. Beriberi, a disease of malnutrition, is common among students, an eloquent witness to the genuineness of much of their poverty.

The public of ancient times recognized that neither

students nor teachers could live on air and high thinking. Therefore it was customary to offer gifts to the teacher. Rich men supported students in various ways, often inviting them to live in their houses, incidentally benefiting by the literary accomplishments which these protégés placed at their disposal.

The modern Japanese man of means always supports a number of students. One who learns the ins and outs of centers of learning such as Tokyo or Kyoto will be impressed by the number of student dormitories which prosperous men have established. Usually the dormitory houses young men from the donor's home province.

It is not unusual for a foreigner living in Japan to have an experience like that which opens this sketch. Should he be a school-teacher, he may have many such visitors. Their offers to live with one and eat at his expense are not insults, but compliments. We who value things by price and tend to overlook the subtler phases of life, may well seek to appreciate these ways of a wiser folk. "The gift without the giver is bare": taking a penniless student into your home is somehow different from giving him a scholarship at long range; different again from saying "This university has no responsibility for students outside of the classroom."

But the gloom — how explain that? Our prospective student is weighted down with the tragedy of this world, the burden of its very existence. He wonders about his next incarnation; will he in the next life be great and honored,

or is he again to pine in obscurity? I have known more than one young man to take his own life because he had been led to believe that in his next life he would be a great general like Napoleon, or a famous scholar; so by suicide he hoped to hasten the day. High-school lads used to pore by the hour over Nietzsche, Tolstoi, or Schopenhauer; even in these latter days of decadent prosperity and vulgar moving pictures, they still revert to the gloomy philosophers.

This melancholy tinge of student mentality is probably rooted in social conditions. Even so a bilious intellectualism flourished in pre-war Russia. It may be associated with the extremely hard work demanded of Japanese pupils — first by the severe entrance examinations which often bar from the higher schools nine of every ten applicants; later by the unreasonably heavy schedule of studies imposed by a mirthless but ambitious Department of Education. Student suicides are frequent; more than six hundred annually throw themselves over the high cliff of Kegon waterfall at Nikko or into the smoking crater of some volcano.

The commercial idea is taking hold on the student class. Young men are flocking to commercial schools to learn how to make money. Dollar-madness is destroying what remains of many of the nobler traditions of Old Japan. The students live under strain — the physical strain of trying to master two diverse cultures, for they must learn the old ways of the Orient as well as the new civilization from the Occident; the social strain of family maladjustments and lack of

wholesome contact with the other sex; the spiritual strain of being torn loose from the anchors of old religions and customs to drift helplessly in a flood of philosophies, religions, and sciences from abroad.

"I am very gloomy and melancholy. Perhaps I shall suicide." Could you and I, in his shoes, do better?

TRYING TO HUSTLE THE EAST

Kipling said it couldn't be done. Many a discouraged, worn-out white man, invalided home from the Orient, has agreed with Kipling. But the East can hustle, if it so choose.

My summer cottage is located on a mountain lake in central Japan, within reach of the sea breeze from the Japan Sea. One year I hunted up a Japanese builder to make some additions. This builder was much in demand, for cottages were being put up by the dozen on the shores of the lake.

Another American who wanted a new cottage tried to hire the same builder. He was a "go-getter," and the builder was his victim. Even in progressive and hustling Japan it is not always wise to display signs of haste when dealing with the building trades.

The head carpenter first explained to my friend that laborers couldn't be had to level the ground. So flimsy an excuse was not acceptable to the hustling American. He mopped perspiration from his brow for days while he assembled and directed a gang of coolies and personally saw that the ground was leveled.

"Now," he explained to me, "that carpenter hasn't a bit of an excuse. I tell you, the only way to get things done here is to keep right at 'em!"

He "kept at 'em" with a vengeance. Everywhere the builder went, he found our "go-getter" planted squarely in

his way, and his stock of excuses ran low. One day he ambled over to my cottage and asked me to tell him what work I wanted done. Having long ago parted company with the "go-getter" idea, I invited him to sit down and drink tea. We talked of the weather and the world in general. At last I hinted that while he must be very busy, it would be a great favor if he would honorably add another room to my house some time before the next summer season.

"Well," he observed, "I have a lot of work to do, and it's hard to keep men up here when Tokyo wages are higher, and I haven't any lumber here now. But of course I should like to oblige you. Just what do you wish done?"

We went over the house in detail. I had some doubts about getting the work done, for alterations are no more in favor with carpenters in Japan than in the Occident. When we finished the explanations he asked: "Are you in a hurry?" Here was the critical point!

"Oh, it's not a life-and-death affair — but of course, if the work should be all done before we come next summer, it would be very pleasant," I replied. "Yes, of course, you want to use it next summer," he assented.

So far so good; now for the next step: "In fact, if you could get the major part of the work done this fall before snow flies, it would leave you free for the rush next spring when the people are all demanding their new cottages at once," I cautiously suggested.

"Oh, they don't wait till spring with their demands — one

of them is most honorably noisy now," observed the builder with a twinkle in his eye. Possibly the vision of our "go-getter" mopping sweat from his brow arose before him.

"Well, there's no such rush in my case. You know your own work and can plan it to suit yourself. Drop me a line when you get started and I'll run up from Tokyo any time to go over things with you," I assured him with the air of one who has no concern for such mundane things as time.

"Probably it would be wise to start work this fall. I think I can find a few workmen and make a beginning," the builder mused. "As you say, there is a rush of work in the spring. This other gentleman is quite insistent that I build his honorable house this fall — at once in fact. I do not know what can be done."

With that and some further polite phrases we parted. I confess I was none too sure about the date of completion of the work. When I left for Tokyo at the end of the hot season, there was not a stick of wood on the leveled site owned by my friend the "go-getter." I concluded that my attempts at the slower Oriental method were at least even, thus far in the race.

Before snow came I had a letter from the builder. "The frame of your honorable new room is up and the roof is on. Deign to come and give me information regarding details," it ran. The next week when I came, the frame was up, the roof done, and some of the siding on. We talked — still without haste — about the finishing of the work, and I

departed. En route I went around by the lot of my hustling acquaintance. The lot was still there, but not a stick of wood was visible. Evidently the Orient hustles in its own way.

In the spring I went up to discuss details of the interior. I arrived at 4 A.M. and found signs of work at the house. Several carpenters had apparently been there the previous day in anticipation of my coming. At half past five (still A.M.) the head carpenter appeared. "There is much time. Will you not come to my miserable rooms and have a cup of hot tea?" he humbly announced. I went and consumed tea, Japanese pickles, and boiled eggs to my stomach's content. Not a word about the house. I played with his little boy and gossiped with his wife for an hour.

At last he said: "Would you like to see some of the new houses I am building?" and off we went on a trip around the summer colony grounds. Of course, he wanted to give his carpenters time to arrive and begin work, that I might see things in full blast when I finally reached my own cottage. The East had decided to hustle, but it wanted the stage well set.

At the cottage, amid the noise of a half dozen carpenters at work, we went over details. I returned to Tokyo, with a suspicion that within ten minutes after my departure the men would be hard at work on some other cottage, and that my family might find the work partly unfinished when they arrived for the summer.

On the way I passed the lot of the hustler and took heart.

It was still innocent of building operations. "The only way to get things done here is to keep right at 'em" ran through my head, but coupled with it were Kipling's lines about the epitaph of the fool "Who tried to hustle the East."

Late in July I arrived for vacation. My family had occupied the remodeled cottage for a month. Only a few odd bits of work remained for the builder's men. I found my "go-getter" friend: sweating again, over the erection of the frame of his cottage.

No, the East cannot be hustled. If left alone, it will hustle itself enough for practical purposes. Things might be done faster, but why perspire one's way through life? So reasons the Orient.

SONG BIRDS

Japan is not a land of song birds.

Besides paved streets, sidewalks, and sewer systems, there are other things which the American rarely finds in Japan. Except in the vicinity of shrines and temples, or in the open country, he misses large shade trees. To one accustomed to the cool gothic arches of American elms, lack of shade from the blazing Oriental sun is keenly felt. Japanese rarely use trees for shade on their streets.

Not that there is any failure to appreciate the beauty of trees: marvellous dwarf trees are produced. These little works of art are coddled and coaxed into the forms of beast, bird, man, or boat. Along the seashore, groves of ancient pines, gnarled and twisted by the storms of generations, give the landscape its characteristic atmosphere. Throughout the land, flowering trees such as the cherry, the camellia, the plum and the magnolia, are greatly prized; but cultivation of trees simply for shade and beauty of form is rare.

An efficient Government has by reforestation clad Japan's mountains with perpetual green. Even the age-long barrenness of Korea's hills is giving way to fresh verdure. Japanese cities, however, remain deserts, save for an occasional promise of future shade held out by rows of young trees along a progressive street.

People and Government alike fall short of appreciating the

value of wild birds. In vain the visitor listens for their songs in the cities. The potentialities of birds as destroyers of insects remain undiscovered. From time immemorial, insect pests have been dealt with by the slow, sure method of picking off each individual bug by hand and firmly passing him on to the next world.

Aside from the cuckoo, the "Japanese nightingale," and, haunting the remoter districts, a cousin of the robin, song birds are almost unknown. The sparrow, kite and crow are common. The latter is a huge apostle of gloom, whose harsh guffaw puts to shame the comparatively soft, tender note of the little American crow. One may live months in Japan, vaguely conscious of a lack in his environment, suddenly to exclaim, "Why, there are no song birds here!"

The song of birds receives its due in literature and poetry. There are odes to the nightingale, by the bookful. The poets, however, are outnumbered by the "big, red-blooded, he-men," who, armed with air-rifles, spend Sundays showing their coolness and bravery by picking birds off the telephone wires. These valiant warriors rejoice loudly when they kill a swallow or song bird instead of the usual sparrow. With the aid of swarms of tailless cats, they keep the bird population at a minimum.

Bird stores are numerous. Rich and gaudy tropical plumage often goes with raucous voices; more modest singers also are present to fill the air with music, but they are always caged. Not all the captive singers are birds: in summer,

many inmates of the bamboo prisons are insects. The cicada is the commonest of these "singing insects." Japan is the land of the cicada. In the dog days their shrill, rasping voices sound from dawn to dark, with repertoires varying from a ceaseless "ziz-z-z-z-z" to elaborate variations on a theme resembling the toneless clatter of a spinning-wheel.

The cicada begins life underground, as a greedy grub. With the coming of warm weather he sheds his skin, to emerge as a fierce-looking beetle the size of a thimble. Later, his back cracks open, and out crawls a full-fledged cicada — moist, soft, and green. He resembles a glorified, colorful horsefly; his length may be as much as two inches. The gauzy wings have a wide spread, although he is helpless until they become thoroughly dry. Then he seeks a tree or telephone pole and the din commences.

Not being an entomologist, I can tell no more of the cicada's habits, save that I have never known one to cease his nerve-racking noise long enough to obtain a square meal. Hence I have concluded, without benefit of science, that their lives are one long carnival of disturbing the peace. One cicada can make a quite respectable din: a half dozen mounted on the radiator of a motor car should render a Klaxon superfluous.

The cicada is greatly esteemed by the Japanese. Although my crude Occidental perceptions are unequal to discovering the beauty in their chirping, squeaking, rattling, and sawing, beauty is said to be there.

Armed with long bamboo poles, the children pursue the luckless insects, inducing them to desert friendly trees and electric wires to perch on the tip of the pursuer's pole. Should the captive prove a good singer, he will be caged; if not, he is slated for vivisection. I must confess to a savage delight in witnessing the latter bit of barbarity. After several weeks of this unrelenting buzz-saw concert one grows irritated. Unfortunately the catch of the youngsters is not sufficient perceptibly to diminish the supply.

The stores, as we have noted, display selected cicada songsters in cages. Almost every house has from one to ten such cages on the upper balcony, just to make sure that no one goes insane from silence and loneliness. The varieties are named and pedigreed; the enthusiast recognizes each on sight.

As summer nears its close, there comes a day for freeing the insects. At a given hour the cage doors are opened, the cicadas soar off into the blue, and the tiny cages are put away till another season. This is the typically Japanese touch. The little creatures have given pleasure; why not give them freedom for a time before the chill of autumn claims their lives? Thus the gift is bestowed in picturesque fashion.

DRUMMING UP RELIGION

Who can pass through an autumn in Japan and fail to hear of St. Nichiren, the Buddhist reformer whose following among the humbler folk is legion? The Nichirenites are the most vigorous sect of Japanese Buddhism. These Fundamentalists of the Buddhist world combine ultra one-hundred-per-cent patriotism with a dash of the Salvation Army and the Ku Klux Klan.

Literally and figuratively, the most striking thing about Nichirenism is the drum. September has barely dragged its muggy, mouldy weeping days from the calendar when the Nichiren priests bring out the drumsticks and dust the drums for the October festivals. He who would enter Nichiren's Paradise must possess a strong right arm and a lusty voice, for admission is consequent upon much loud repetition of Nichiren's famous prayer, intoned to the endless beating of a drum which is first cousin to the tom-tom. The sect is so active in October that one easily concludes that the sacred portals open in that month alone.

Never can I forget my first introduction to these religious drummers, one October night in 1917. I was about to retire when I heard a din in the distance. Wild voices, seemingly bloodthirsty, chanted a weird cry while drums beat out an Oriental tattoo the like of which I had never heard. I had not yet been in Japan a month, and when the mob drew

nearer I thought that surely they must be ascending our hill to seize the foreigners.

Through the window I saw lights — dozens of bobbing paper lanterns, and above them big lanterns on poles surrounded by showers of paper flowers. The din was earsplitting. The long line of marchers was armed — with drumsticks. Their monotonous chant rose above the throbbing tom-toms.

To my relief they passed without stopping. There were hundreds of marchers, each with lantern and drum, all taking it seriously. Night after night they paraded through different streets, shouting and drumming their way to bliss. Year after year these October processions repeated themselves, always imposing and plainly in popular favor.

Up to the year following the earthquake, the festival continued unchanged. At the earthquake anniversary observance, Nichiren's insistent petition filled the air.

The next year saw a change. Although in the poorer districts the processions continued almost as usual, in a large part of the city their life had departed. Despite nightly processions, the multitude seemed to have deserted the noisy prophet. After marching a few blocks the crowds would melt away, leaving a few stragglers aimlessly carrying the gay standards or conversing in listless groups. Closer inspection revealed the fact that even at the start the drummers were mostly small boys of the drumming age. No longer, in the districts I observed, did old ladies carry babies strapped

to their backs as they marched half the night over muddy streets, climbing steep hills to famous temples, pounding and shouting the while. No longer did vigorous youths and coquettish barmaids march with the throng, yelling for their souls' salvation.

The old ladies were at home, smoking long pipes on the front doorsteps; the young folks were engaged in "petting parties" in the dim light of the movies, practicing what the screen had taught them. Nichiren seemed suddenly to have been left behind in the march of progress, a toy for boys, a dying husk of a religion for bearded priests to mumble over. The Orient, however, is fickle. Other years may yet see the return of the processions in all their former glory.

One night I wandered forth to enjoy the streets, a pastime which Japan affords *par excellence*. Drums began to sound at a near-by Nichiren temple, and I paused to watch the procession. The followers of the impetuous prophet of noise were just receiving the final blessing of the priest as they set out on their march. The big standards with the lanterns and paper flowers were carried, significantly enough, by coolies hired for the occasion. There was a crowd at the temple entrance. For a moment it seemed as though the scenes of more prosperous years were to be repeated.

The lanterns began to move and the drums to beat the endless refrain of the prayer. As the marchers filed past, they proved to be boys of about ten years, with one old man piously hobbling in the rear.

An impulse drove me into the temple yard after the crowd thinned out. Could it be true that Nichirenism was really dying? The little enclosure was momentarily deserted, its loneliness emphasized by the litter that a crowd always leaves. In the back of the ornate temple a few priests were drinking tea and chatting.

An old woman, bent and poor, walked furtively up to the temple. At the font where worshipers purify themselves, she washed her hands; then she dropped a coin in the contribution box and pulled the rope attached to the gong at the temple door. This bell is designed to call the attention of the god. To the Japanese this is in no way inappropriate. Clapping her hands and bowing low, she uttered a prayer, brushed tears from her eyes, and departed. For this faithful old soul Nichirenism was in no wise dead. The incongruous mixture of Shinto ceremonial and Buddhist teaching, the drums, the shouting, the temple gong, were to her the setting in which she might approach her god. Heathen foolery and hopeless futility? I cannot tell.

Two younger women with a little girl followed close behind. They also washed their hands, pulled the bell rope, dropped coins in the box, and bowed in prayer.

The newcomers walked to a smaller shrine at one side, close to my vantage point. For the first time I looked carefully and perceived that it housed a bronze image of *Jizō*, patron of children. *Jizō* was mounted in a large bowl filled with water. Dozens of tiny wooden dippers and straw

brushes were fastened on the interior of the shrine. Taking a dipper in one hand and a brush in the other, each of the trio proceeded industriously to pour water over the image. Carefully they scrubbed it with the brush, bowing in prayer as the washing ended.

It was a picture to remember: the quaint charm and dim mystery of the temple and its shrines, mixed with the crassest superstition and magic; the quiet simplicity of the temple yard, so recently resounding to the beating of many drums; across the street the glare of electric lamps from a radio store, where loud-speakers blared forth a tuneless popular ditty. Radio and scrubbed idols, drumming at the gates of Paradise, and the raucous rattle of Klaxons from passing limousines: there is Japan in a nutshell.

At home from my hilltop I could still hear the insistent, complicated rhythm of the drums, as the faithful continued to parade Tokyo's muddy streets shouting for salvation. But the skies overhead were pierced by powerful searchlights, proclaiming that Tokyo had just opened an electrical exhibition to convince the world that in scientific progress Japan is the equal of the West.

Where in human history is the parallel of this?

MILITARISM

Japan has been frankly militaristic during the past generation. Despite the coming of universal suffrage and the growth of democracy, militarism still influences her life and policies.

Before we declaim against her, let us consider what she would be without militarism. We can understand that only by looking at the other nations of Asia and Africa.

India was not militaristic. Where is India's independence?

China was not militaristic. What has happened to China? Why is she helpless, the prey of bandit chiefs?

Korea was not militaristic. Who runs Korea?

African nations may have loved to fight but they had nothing resembling modern militarism. Who owns Africa?

French Indo-China, Burma, the Straits Settlements, and other Oriental lands had no militarism. Where is their freedom?

Save for an invasion by the Mongols and some expeditions into Korea, Japan never had a foreign war until modern times. Late in the nineteenth century she woke from a three hundred years' slumber and sent men throughout the world to report on whatever they might find. These men announced that the nations possessing efficient military organization and equipment were called Powers, and were unmolested by the rest of the world. These same Powers were

busily grabbing Asia and Africa. The Powers talked many languages, listened to but one: that of Force.

Japan learned that language. Today she stands alone as the one Asiatic Power whose voice is respected in the Occident. She braved the Russian Bear and drove him back into his frozen steppes. During the World War both sides sought her aid: it was Japan who policed the Pacific and guarded the Australian troops in transit. It was Japan who was politely invited to join the Powers at Versailles.

Did she owe her place among the seven great Powers to her spiritual qualities? or to her accomplishments in art? or to her religion and race? or did her battleships and army do the trick?

Japan is neither foolish nor blind. The Japanese people do not love militarism — in fact, most of her young men hate it. When, however, they grow restive and talk of ridding themselves of the system, there comes one unanswerable argument:

"Where would Japan be without militarism?"

When the Japanese people are assured of safety and equal treatment among the nations, without a military system to argue their case, there is every promise that they will eagerly rid themselves of the burden of an army they do not like and a navy which is beyond their pocketbook. At heart they are a peace-loving folk.

What would become of Japan without militarism?

THE MIGHTY STOOP

I was in a barber shop, which of itself was not remarkable. In addition to being a place where excellent service is cheap, a Japanese barber shop is a marvel of decorum, with *kimono*-clad gentlemen snoring lazily while their faces are shaved. Demure Nipponese girls have their faces and necks shaved as do the men.

This time something made a stir. A prosperous-appearing man in frock coat entered and bestowed a genial smile and a deep bow upon the proprietor and then upon each patron in turn, excepting myself. I opened my eyes and took notice. Then he made a speech, thanking all for their many favors, saying that it was his object to serve them to the best of his ability. He emphasized the fact that his ability was ample for their needs. I was a bit puzzled, for never before had I seen anything of the kind in Japan. It seemed so much like some suave politician in the States just before election.

I had only my own cranial density to blame for my failure instantly to comprehend. The moment the smiling paragon of virtue had bowed himself out of the door, the head barber, who has been abroad and knows Occidental ways, winked at me and said: "See! Japan has the disease now!"

Still I failed to understand. "What disease? What's the big idea?" I inquired from my abysmal ignorance.

"You have them in America: now Japan is afflicted with

them. Have you forgotten that we now have universal suffrage and election time is near? Even the humble patrons of the barber shops are receiving the smiles and bows of the mighty politicians!"

Surely I had been slow to comprehend. Do I not hail from the land where the months before election are bright with smiles and glowing with promises? Japan was about to hold her first election under universal male suffrage. The politicians, who formerly scorned the common people from lofty heights of bureaucratic indifference, had suddenly become chummy, affable, and hail-fellow-well-met to the last degree. And promises — "if my unspeakable opponent be defeated, and I, the Yellow Hope, am elected," what wonders may not happen!

"Now Japan is afflicted with them!" My barber friend, your words are wiser than you suspect.

LAUGH AND JAPAN LAUGHS WITH YOU

One myth whose explosion is long overdue is the Oriental's reputation for mirthlessness and stolidity. He can mask his feelings at times: so can the Occidental. That, however, is a long way from saying that he has no emotional life. In Japan he who looks for fun in the lives of the people can find it.

It may not be always best to seek too systematically for fun. There is one American, born in Japan, who knows the language perfectly. He maintains that while Japanese laugh as heartily as anyone else, he cannot discover why they laugh at the things which seem most to amuse them. On one occasion he accompanied two young Japanese to a lecture by a famous humorist of their own race.

He understood the lecture and observed that some perfectly commonplace remarks convulsed the audience with laughter, but for the life of him he could not find the point of the jokes. He noted down the remarks at which the crowd laughed loudest and longest. On returning home with his companions he explained that he was trying to get some real understanding of Japanese humor, then read the carefully recorded remarks one by one, demanding the reason for the mirth of the audience.

The young men looked bewildered, and in every case admitted that there was nothing particularly funny about

the remarks and that the only reason they could give for laughter was that everyone else had laughed. Then the memory of the speech overcame them and they shook with renewed laughter, declaring between gasps, "We don't know why we laughed at him, but he certainly was funny!"

"There you have it," some keen-eyed reader is saying. "Well, if that isn't inscrutability, what is? How can an Occidental ever understand such people?" Yet they are perfectly understandable. The Japanese are very sociable. With people all around him, the typical Japanese warms up and is among the most easily contented of living beings. His country is overpopulated because he loves it that way. It is thus easy to understand how the popular humorist kept his audience laughing with such slender resources in the way of humor or wit. He did it because he had a crowd. The people laughed because they expected to laugh and be happy. All the lecturer had to do was to put himself into that sort of mood and talk: he felt like laughing, they were all set for a good time — then why should one exert himself to produce sparkling drops from the well of wit? The more individualistic, more intellectualistic foreigner, schooled to seek a reason for everything, sat there in distress because the laughter was out of proportion to the cause, forgetting that he could not have made Will Rogers or Mark Twain comprehensible to his Japanese friends.

For the most part the laughter of Japan is genuine. Often I have been in a crowd which showed signs of losing

patience, but usually some bright remark has set them laughing and saved the day. Once in a crowded surface car people were packed in until all reasonable standards of comfort and decency had been left behind. At every stop the conductor went through his monotonous chant of "Move a little to the front, please!" which was rather irritating, on top of other discomforts. Suddenly the motorman jammed on the brakes in a fashion that piled us all in the front of the car, a bruised, disgusted and angry mass of humanity. Just then the conductor, from force of habit, sang out, "Move forward in the car, please!" One big fellow picked himself out of the pile and retorted, "Say, conductor, you keep still awhile and let the motorman tend to that part of it. He keeps his mouth shut but he gets it done better than you do!" In the laugh that followed, sore toes and black and blue spots were forgotten.

The Japanese loves a pun. His language invites, even forces, punning. Every ideograph has at least two readings, and therefore every word is written with characters whose pronunciation may call up entirely different and often incongruous associations. Homonyms — words identical in form and sound but possessing two or more different meanings — are legion. Some monosyllables have from twenty-five to thirty entirely different meanings. The pun just naturally pops up in every sentence; a group of Japanese will amuse themselves for hours with clever puns.

Yet in the long run it is easy to sympathize with the

newcomer's first impression, that the Japanese are a sad people. One does not see as many smiling faces and hear so much happy laughter as in America. Many a gay *kimono* covers a breaking heart. It might not be too much to say that the general average of happiness runs low among the people of the Sunrise Kingdom. That is no fault of the individual: he does his best to find satisfaction and contentment even in trifles, makes the most of every occasion for laughter, from the rollicking boisterousness of the temple festivals to the quiet chuckle which accompanies some clever twist of a clear-cut Japanese poem.

HIMEJI CASTLE

Japanese do not make pilgrimages to mortify the flesh. A pilgrimage is a visit to some historic spot, some scene famous for its beauty, some shrine whose god has virtue to spare. Japanese pilgrims are usually happy, carefree, ready to accept Nature as she is, eager to regale themselves with beauty.

I could not leave Japan without one last pilgrimage of my own. Himeji Castle must of necessity live in memory for anyone sensitive to Japanese culture, and I felt I must have one more day beside those storied white towers. Thus refreshed, memory might be trusted to bring back the picture whenever nerves tired by the clatter of American life should demand peace.

Because it saw very little actual warfare, the castle at Himeji is one of the best-preserved in Japan. Its architectural beauty and the perfection of its natural setting have won for it the name of " The White Heron." Set off by gracefully curved roofs, its ten stories rise from the top of a hill surrounded by a wide plain. On three sides of the plain are low mountains; on the fourth is the sea. The castle dominates the landscape.

Part of the ancient moat at the foot of the hill is now a lotus pond: the remainder has been filled in. Children play where chargers of gallant knights once pawed before the castle gates. Twisted trunks of hoary pine trees and tall

up-pointing fingers of dark cryptomerias soften the ruggedness of the massive stone abutments and hide the few scars of battle.

All the approaches lead up steep paths, close under frowning walls. High above are slotted openings, so arranged that cauldrons of boiling oil could be poured down on attacking parties. Both in the main tower and in the smaller towers on the ramparts are openings for archers.

Within the great rooms all is still. Centuries have imparted dignity to the huge timbers and rough floors. The storerooms are bare: great gates and heavy trap doors stand open to the casual tourist. The hara-kiri room, provided for the self-immolation of condemned knights, is dusty and silent, with no trace of the gruesome scenes enacted there.

Ghosts inhabit the castle. The old people will tell where and how often they can be seen. Perhaps the ghosts feared the white man, for I never saw one. They must be there: such a place could not be without them. When chilly night winds moan and sigh among the pines and the desecrating tread of the sightseer is stilled, the ghosts claim the castle for their own.

Oftenest seen and heard is the ghost of O Kiku *San,* maid-servant in the olden days. She had been entrusted with ten golden plates, the choicest part of the banquet service. Her duty was to wash, count and guard these treasures. One night, after the last banqueter had left, she gathered up the plates and washed them. Then she counted: "*Ichimai,*

Photo by courtesy of the Rev. F. M. Derwacter

HIMEJI CASTLE, "THE WHITE HERON"

nimai, sanmai, shimai, gomai, rokumai, shichimai, hachimai, kumai . . ." Where was the tenth? Again she counted — nine! There followed a frantic search of the banquet hall and other rooms. No plate came to light. Once more she counted shrilly — "One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine!"

Carefully she put away the nine plates. Out of the castle she went, straight to the deep well which goes from the hill-top to water level beneath the surface of the plain. Her voice rose to a scream as she counted again — at "nine" she dived, with a shriek, into the well.

Plenty of people will swear that they have seen the slight girlish figure, poised at night on the well-curb; that they have heard the frantic counting from one to nine, followed by a scream and a dull, muffled splash. The old well is now carefully covered by heavy iron screening — but ghosts scorn such futile barriers.

Another ghost is that of the master-builder who planned the castle. His architectural genius needs no apology: both for sturdiness and for consummate beauty of form his castle belongs among mankind's treasures. In cutting the timbers, however, an error was made; when the skeleton of the tower was erected it was out of plumb. None but the master seemed aware of the defect, and work continued. One day the lord of the castle was showing the half-completed frame to some ladies, and one of the visitors observed: "The tower is not perfectly vertical!"

The flaw being evident to the eye of a mere woman, there remained but one course for the builder. He climbed to the top of the tower and threw himself to death on the rocks below. It is said that his apparition still ascends the tower, and after standing a moment on the golden tile at one corner of the ridge, leaps to a nightly death in the courtyard.

Inseparably coupled with the name of Himeji Castle is the legend of one soul who surely earned the right to rest in peace. When the foundations were built, the lord commanded all his people to contribute to the work. An aged widow had nothing to offer. She appeared at the castle struggling beneath the weight of her millstone, resolved to subsist on unground grain during the short space of life that remained to her. "Lo, my lord! A stone for the wall! Deign to accept it, for I have nothing else to offer!"

High in the massive wall, protected from adventurous vandals by an iron grating, is set the widow's millstone. The story of the widow's sacrifice is repeated wherever Himeji Castle is mentioned. There is infinite pathos in that round bit of stone, lovingly set in the wall by skillful masons, dwarfed to a mere speck by the enormous stones around it. In that stone is summed up the atmosphere of the spot. This "White Heron Castle" is not a product of capitalist bosses and union workmen bent on self-enrichment. It breathes forth the devotion of loyal vassals, of honorable knights who calmly walked into the Suicide Room rather than face defeat

or disgrace, of artisans whose touch was guided by love of beauty.

The days of chivalry are no more. A bugle call, harsh and grating, resounds through the castle. The soldiers of modern Japan are pouring out of barracks on the plain below, mere ants seen from the tower. They do not fight with swords, nor challenge the enemy with poetry. Their uniforms do not fit, their shoes are heavy, their eyes dull. Peasants they are, armed with modern machines, obeying arrogant officers. This is not the land of the *samurai*. Nor will it ever again be a land of *samurai:* in a fretful world where battleships, aeroplanes and TNT decide the fate of nations, beautiful castles and honorable knights find no place.

GEN-BU-DŌ

In the spring of 1925 the scenes of terror which filled the Tokyo region in September, 1923, were repeated in a secluded district bordering the Japan Sea, when the towns of Toyo-oka and Kinosaki were wiped out by earthquake and fire.

Kinosaki was a rare beauty spot in a picturesque land. A stream wound through a deep gorge in the mountains: hot springs gushed from both walls of the gorge. The narrow valley was lined with Japanese hotels of the finest kind. Between the village and the Japan Sea lay a park of unusual charm, covering a round, wooded hill. He who arose at dawn to behold the fire of the rising sun on the sea and the tree-clad islands in the estuary, lived a richer life for the memory.

Our present theme is not Kinosaki, its beauty, nor the horror of its passing. Some miles up the broad river which empties into the sea at Kinosaki was a famous cave, called *Gen-bu-dō*. Like the other delightful spots in the vicinity, it was little known to foreigners. Nevertheless, the popularity of the hot springs at Kinosaki insured a supply of Japanese visitors.

When I visited the place the first snow of the season lay on the hilltops, for it was December. The " tired business men " who usually frequented the district were settling their

affairs before the year-end, with no time for sightseeing; the cave was deserted. With two Japanese companions, I left the train at a tiny riverside hamlet — as desolate a spot as we could have imagined. By the water's edge we discovered a flat-bottomed ferryboat. The ferryman was a deaf-mute. As he poled us across the noiseless river, it seemed that sound had departed from the Universe. One wondered whether the spheres, too, had stopped their singing. The distant mountains, snow-clad, were inspiring in their cold dignity; the wide, shallow river wound peacefully between hills reminiscent of the Susquehanna or Delaware, but clustered thatch roofs by the station stopped such comparisons.

On the hillside opposite the hamlet was the cave, a great rocky scar, reached by a stone stairway. We left our silent ferryman and ascended the crooked stairs, between rows of leafless cherry trees that promised springtime loveliness. The final flight of steps was hewn from the rock, with hexagonal columns rising like banister posts on either side. A long level space then, and at last the cave itself.

The cave was not a natural formation. The ancient lords of the land found that the stone of this hill was ready cut for building, being naturally formed into columns composed of hexagonal blocks some five inches thick. They dug farther and farther into the hill, until the modern Government put a stop to the use of the stone by placing the cave under official protection. So much stone had been removed that the hillside projected full forty feet horizontally beyond

the entrance of the cave. We wondered if we could complete our tour before that enormous overhanging weight would drop.

Geologically the formation is well known: basalt rock formed into hexagonal columns by pressure and heat in bygone ages. The nearer one approached the center of the hill, the more nearly vertical were the columns. From all sides they sloped in toward the summit, like titanic macaroni forced through an inverted funnel. Here and there clusters of columns had been left to support the roof. From the entrance of the cave it was thirty feet to the back wall. The width of the cave, with its four entrances, was such that its depth seemed very little. From a distance the impression was that of shallowness.

On entering, one felt as though he had blundered into the interior of some gigantic pipe organ, an illusion speedily dispelled by the pools of water at the bottom. The pools were very clear and still. My companions naïvely remarked that the water was warm in winter and cool in summer, which indicated a constant temperature the year round.

A tiny stream trickled from the overhanging cliff, becoming mist long before it reached the earth. Its cool spray nourished mosses in the crevices of the rocks.

The tourist is the same whatever his race or nationality: every accessible column and some apparently inaccessible ones bore hundreds of names of past visitors. In Japan such inscriptions are more picturesque than in the Occident, for

each scribe tries to outdo the others in the skill with which the Chinese characters for his name are painted.

On the hillside at the right, high above the cave, was the inevitable Shinto shrine. A little pile of stones, heaped up by pilgrims, bore witness to the piety of sightseers.

In the gathering darkness we returned, to rediscover sound when a woman on the bank called loudly for the ferryman, who had returned to his hut across the river. We watched for some miracle to enable the deaf to hear, but the commonplace happened: a man emerged from another hut and shook the slumbering mute, pointing across the river at us. The echoes of our voices died away to silence, broken only by the ripples beneath the prow of the boat.

A train swooped down with a roar and carried one of our number up-river. With my remaining companion, I began the five-mile walk downstream to Kinosaki, where we donned padded *kimono* in the quiet of a comfortable hotel. After relaxing in a luxurious tank of steaming water from the hot springs, we welcomed the oblivion of slumber.

The earthquake which wiped out Kinosaki brought destruction to the cave of *Gen-bu-dō*. That overhanging hillside fulfilled its threat of collapse: an avalanche buried the entrance to the cave. Perhaps future builders will carry off the freshly disclosed store of Nature's building stones; centuries hence another cave may attract the sightseer.

BEANS TO ROUT THE DEVILS

One evening in February I suddenly awoke to the fact that bean-throwing day had arrived. Our maid had, indeed, gone home for the evening, but it did not occur to us that beans had anything to do with it. A stroll in the misty evening assisted my memory.

On every side there was merriment — children running in the streets with that excited bustle which accompanies a holiday, older folks glimpsed through half-opened paper doors in the act of eating a special feast. In every house there seemed to be a family reunion.

The little galvanized iron Shinto shrine had become conspicuous despite its drab post-earthquake dress. The boom of big drums resounded steadily, and the droning of priests blended with the sound of hundreds of scuffing wooden shoes in the shrine yard. Entering the enclosure, one saw the front of the shrine aglow with many candles. An interested crowd stood near the door. Now and then a worshiper tossed a coin into the yawning maw of the contribution box and pulled the bell rope to attract the attention of a sleepy god to his prayer.

Within the shrine electric lights reinforced the flickering candles. Priests clad in green, red, and yellow robes advanced to a sort of altar, mumbled their chant, and retraced their steps. One of them knelt before a platform on which

was a tray bearing pounded rice cakes, bowed, chanted a prayer, raised the tray as if offering it to the god, and backed away.

Two or three women worshipers of special zeal squatted on the mats in the open space between the altar and the doorway. The crowd was now eager, now indifferent, the men smoking, the women jogging babies who preferred their own whine to that of the priests. A group of noisy students bent on a good time strode through the yard of the shrine with scarcely a look at the mummery.

This was the date of the ancient New Year, still persisting in folkways despite its displacement in business by the Occidental calendar. On this occasion the land was to be purified from devils and bad fairies, with all their baleful influences. At every shrine and in each house, the bean-throwing ceremony was in full swing.

Be it known that devils, at least Japanese ones, are afraid of beans, properly cooked and of the right variety. The beans must not have sprouted. No devil ever fled from a sprouted bean. All day busy housewives prepare the beans, together with a feast for the whole family. At evening the demons are chased. In every house the strongest or oldest man conducts the ceremony. At the shrines famous wrestlers or other strong men strike fear into the ranks of the devils. The master of ceremonies takes a handful of beans and stands at a point of vantage. To the accompaniment of voice and gestures sufficient in themselves to frighten a mere

demon, the beans are thrown vigorously at every corner of the room. The regular formula is *Oni wa soto — Fuku wa uchi,* which, freely interpreted, means "Devils get out — good luck come in!"

Whether the people still believe in demons is beside the point. The majority of the common people still believe — nevertheless, the whole affair furnishes a jolly good time for everyone, from baby to grandma. Whether or not demons be real, it is fun to throw beans all over the house on one night in the year. Every human being believes himself a victim of bad luck, and longs for an opportunity to chase the jinx out of the door with a tin can tied to its tail — or at least with a few hot beans sticking to its fur, burning holes where they touch. After this demonstration, who would not wish to invite Lady Luck to enter and perch above the dining table for the next year?

Demons may be myths. So also Lady Luck. But beans are cheap, and it's a peck of fun, so Japan makes merry for a night.

OSAKA: JAPAN'S BOOSTER CITY

Perhaps the great Barnum himself could produce a fitting title for an article about Osaka. That overgrown Japanese city has the American disease of Boost. The gentleman from California, his beloved enemy from Seattle and their common foe and brother who sells revamped Florida swamps, need to enlarge their fraternity of the Best, Biggest, and Boosted-est to include Osaka. Osaka's motto might well be "Throw your hammer in the bay; free horns for all!"

The physical Osaka has actually improved. Tortuous streets have been widened and straightened. Standard gauge street cars provide unusually good service, and a subway is enthusiastically "projected." Pavements and sidewalks mitigate the mud which is the bane of most Japanese cities. Osaka boasts "the finest interurban electric railway system in the world" with "more cars leaving Osaka terminals hourly than leave the city of . . . (fill in the name of the city you most dislike) in a whole day." The boosting appears to have foundations.

Department stores, substantial office buildings, and modern hotels poke their heads above the sea of tile roofs. An island in the river has been turned into a civic center; it is adorned with creditable public buildings, chief among them being a new, modern city hall.

Osaka hustles. The crowd in a New York subway seems

meek and patient alongside rush hour in an Osaka station. Everyone hurries — the atmosphere is more American than Oriental, though there cannot be as many as a hundred Americans in the whole city. The old ladies whose long-drawn-out bows of greeting hold up traffic in other Japanese cities receive short shrift in Osaka.

The whole tempo of life has been speeded up. The Japanese counterpart of the cabaret seems to be the most conspicuous industry.

Osaka is famous for coal smoke and half jealous of her fame. Her factories have made literal the saying that Osaka is twice as big and twice as smoky as Pittsburgh. Japan's industrial life centers here: fortunes pyramid themselves while labor leaders agitate. Cynical critics hint that Osaka produces more "Scotch" whiskey than Glasgow and more "Made-in-Germany" toys than Germany itself. Fortunately that sort of wholesale piracy of foreign trade-marks is passing. Many a Japanese house is today justly proud of the reputation of its name.

The Osaka booster "does his durndest" when the subject of population comes up. The speechless visitor is daily and duly reminded that he has come to one of the dozen great cities of the world — to the real metropolis of Japan. The first claim is truer than the second, for Osaka has recently extended her boundaries in a fashion which outdoes Omaha. Tokyo, on the other hand, still clings to the antiquated city limits of pre-industrial days. Thus it is true that within

their respective official boundaries, Osaka does outnumber Tokyo. The capital, however, has hundreds of thousands spilled over its edges, a fact which Osaka boosters blithely ignore. With her boundaries adjusted, Tokyo would perhaps rank next after New York and London among the world's cities.

In enterprise and municipal spirit no one disputes Osaka's leadership. Tokyo, smothered under a blanket of lazy politicians who cling close to the center of political power, cannot match the "go-getter" methods of an industrial giant like Osaka.

Those who look for other things beside size and dollars may soon tire of Osaka, even though her fine social welfare and research institutions make a strong bid for attention. The capital has refinement, intellectual atmosphere, culture, and interest in better things which are meaningless to cocksure Osaka. The very stores reflect the difference. Osaka seems to be all restaurants, beer halls, saloons, movies, and clothing stores. Tokyo exhibits a greater variety of book stores, art shops, photo supply houses, phonograph and music dealers, theaters, schools — symptoms of interests higher than food and drink. Osaka is by no means devoid of these things, but somehow they are more in evidence in Tokyo and Kyoto. Tokyo small talk may run to music and art while Osaka folk frankly discuss the dime novels which Tokyo reads on the sly. Tokyo is not such a city as Boston fondly imagines herself to be, nor is Osaka an unmitigated morass

of industrialism run riot or a sink of iniquity. Osaka's shrines and temples are full of superstitions, despite her material progress. Tokyo shrines are no better, despite her intellectual eminence. Osaka women incline to raciness of dress and speech when compared with the fair inhabitants of Tokyo. Both cities have terrific slum problems; Osaka has courageously tackled hers. The differences between the cities are subtle and far-reaching, wherefore generalizations are risky.

Osaka shares with Florida another distinction besides bloated boosting. She is founded on swamps. Unlike Florida, her swamps have become solid land. Her prosperity rests upon her location at the agricultural and industrial heart of Japan, not upon a "boom" which may be transient. Although Tokyo is complacent about her superiority, Osaka's boosting may some day win the race.

Osaka is alive. She has grown too rapidly. Her friends plead for time to develop her better side. Should they apply to that task the energy which has made her physically Japan's most advanced city, their efforts will be crowned with success.

RAILWAY TRAVEL

An American, newly arrived in Japan, may make uncomplimentary remarks about the railways. In fact, he may continue doing so for years. When he returns to his homeland he may be surprised to find himself giving vent to equally disparaging comments upon the American system. Each has its points of superiority.

Railway equipment, like everything else in the Land of the Rising Sun, is small. Tracks are narrow gauge: the development of the railways has reached a point where a change of gauge is almost beyond the financial power of the Empire. Hence the smallness of rolling stock.

The newcomer comments upon the bad manners of the Japanese traveling public and upon the mountains of baggage piled in the aisles of passenger coaches. He turns up his nose at the refuse heaps which accumulate as passengers consume boxes of oranges, rice and pickles, together with numerous bottles of beer, whiskey and a harmless soft drink, formidably named "champagne cider." The unwillingness of people to move over and make room for others will outrage his sensitive soul. Sleeping figures occupy full-length space on the seats while others stand. The average Japanese seems to feel that he will endanger his life if in the course of a journey he stops eating and drinking, except when an occasional noisy snooze becomes necessary. At every station

persistent vendors of food and drink rescue the passengers from the pangs of hunger and thirst.

The American will also comment upon the use of the car as a dressing room. Indeed, the Japanese sleeping car makes or breaks the foreign traveler. Should the season be summer, the sleeper will be without curtains, each berth being provided with a mosquito net.

If our American be wise, he or she will do as the Romans do, and forget that curtains are lacking. The Japanese at such times mind their own business and expect others to do likewise. On hot nights the traveler who knows Japan is grateful for the extra ventilation and equally grateful for the mosquito net. The ominous whine which lulls him to sleep would be less soothing without that net.

Curtains are the least of one's worries in a sleeper. The narrow gauge necessitates narrower cars and hence narrower berths. Only the beds in certain trans-Pacific liners (the initiated know *which* liners — for others ignorance is bliss) can equal a Japanese sleeper berth for narrowness and unyielding convexity of surface. But the fearfully and wonderfully made beds of the liners must take second place — their Occidental designers at least have figured the length adequately. A sleeper berth in Japan is designed for Japanese. That makes it six inches or a foot shorter than the American variety. The writer, being short for his race, can exactly fit into one, his head touching the top and his feet the bottom, with no room for rattling. Woe to the tall person: he

will dream of Procrustes and his beds before the journey ends!

Americans love speed: Japanese trains are frankly slow, stops are innumerable, and the cars crowded to suffocation. Thirty-three miles in two hours is the express schedule on one level stretch of track near Kobe.

After years in Japan, one's return to America has its surprises. American trains, particularly the through transcontinental ones, are luxurious. But the ointment contains several flies. Before long, one has his schedule upset by a late train, and it dawns on him that almost never in Japan has he known a train to be delayed, save when earthquake or blizzard had upset the entire nation. Especially in the eastern states, he may run across a dusky porter with a grouch. Then he will long for the unfailing courtesy and good cheer of the Japanese train boy, all the more when he recalls that the latter expects no tip.

The train boy in Japan hopes for promotion. More to be desired than tips are words in his praise to conductor or station master. Our own American negro porters, however, feel that because of the color line there is no hope of substantial promotion. Their attention is forced to center upon tips. It makes a difference in the service.

American roadbeds are sometimes worse than those in Japan. Although our wider gauge makes for easy riding, the wretched condition of the track on many lines, combined with high running speeds, makes travel rough. Add to this

the universal American practice of starting and stopping trains with all the symptoms of a violent earthquake, and one's grouch against Japanese railways begins to soften.

Then the buying of tickets! Does an American ticket agent ever tell the truth about the most direct, convenient route? Who can tell when he plans his journey, how many yards of ticket he will need, and how many companies will finally divide the dollars which purchase that imposing strip? Or why one inch of ticket takes him from New York to Chicago and three inches are needed to admit him to the transfer busses with which Mr. Parmalee has made Chicago famous? Before long our traveler is singing the praises of Japan's unified government system, where one small ticket is all he ever needs, where at any station in the land he can buy direct to any other station, and where, since there are no competing lines, the agent always tells one the shortest and best route.

Once on an American train, it is no easy task to discover the names of stations along the road. Often they are not marked at all. One recollects the many conspicuous signs at each Japanese station, written in both Japanese and English, to inform the laziest passenger of the place. There, too, each car bears on its side a sign telling the train's destination — something which would be a boon to the weary, amid the confusion of unmarked commuters' trains scattered over the land facing New York city from the Jersey side.

Whatever the faults of the system, the kindness and

consideration of one's fellow passengers in America warm the heart of one used to a different atmosphere. There are plenty of kind and considerate people in Japan; the traveler will meet with striking instances of thoughtful courtesy, but the atmosphere is different. However polite Japanese may be in their homes or in the parts of their environment which fit in with old customs, it must be admitted that they have not developed a morale for the use of the newer appliances from the West. On public conveyances the rule frequently is "Every man for himself and the devil take the hindmost!" May the day speedily come when the charm of Japanese politeness will be as evident among railway passengers as it is in other situations!

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HOUSES, LIKE MOUNTAINS HIGH

The narrow-gauge train rattled to a jerky stop. The nasal tones of train boys calling the station vied in persistence with the shrill cries of platform vendors of hard and soft drinks, newspapers, fruits, hot tea, and cakes. Scuff-scuff, scuff-scuff — wooden clogs scraped along the footbridge spanning the tracks, out of the wicket and into the one street of the town. The train puffed away and life settled back to the quiet of a mountain village in Japan.

A nondescript building across from the station bore the English legend, " Beer Hall." Red and white bunting and gay signs advertising various brews invited the thirsty traveler to rest. Square benches draped with red blankets served for both chairs and tables within the cool shade of the open pavilion. Flirtatious barmaids trotted back and forth, their bright *kimono* sleeves caught back by strips of colored cloth criss-crossed over their shoulders. Customers stepped out of their wooden shoes and squatted on the blankets, sipping tea or " champagne cider," an innocuous soft drink unworthy of the threat against sobriety in its name.

Back of the tea house, for such it was, despite its modernized title of " Beer Hall," a miniature garden with tumbled rocks and a toy waterfall held fast the charm of Old Japan. At one end stood a graceful Shinto shrine erected perhaps in honor of the family ancestors, or to propitiate some local fox

deity and bring good luck to the tea house. Incense burned before two stone foxes, the smoke curling lazily up to appease the nostrils of hovering spirits.

Over low tiled roofs beyond the garden, one could glimpse the snow-clad peaks of the Japanese Alps, bathed in warm afternoon sunshine. In the street a strange caravan passed, testifying in another way to the proximity of remote places. Three ambling mountains of firewood, each led by a peasant in blue jeans and broad umbrella-like straw hat, challenged the bystander to explain the cause of their locomotion. Inspection revealed four hoofs beneath each; an occasional switch of a tail implied that further search might discover the nose of a scraggly horse at the front of the animated woodpile.

An old peasant bearing a load on his back entered the tea house, deposited his burden, and climbed upon a bench. As his eyes became accustomed to the shade after the blinding road, he stared in open-mouthed amazement. The train had left a foreigner in the village. It was a real foreigner, with red hair, big nose, blue eyes, and white skin, just like the pictures and stories. The foreigner was eating rice cakes. When the maid opened a bottle of "champagne cider" he began to speak. What a harsh voice! How queerly he pronounced Japanese words! Even at that, his words were intelligible; why not converse with the stranger and learn from him?

The peasant moved nearer and lifted his hat. "It is very

rude of me, but may I venture to ask your honorable country?"

The foreigner looked up. "Certainly. I am an American."

"An American? Tell me, please — why do you Americans hate the Japanese and exclude us from your country?"

The American smiled. "We do not all hate the Japanese. Many of us do not approve of the rude methods of our politicians. But do you know that many Americans believe that all Japanese hate America and that Japan is preparing to fight against us?"

The old man scratched his head with a gesture universal in Japan when words fail. "Do Americans really think we dislike them? Or that our little country would attack their big land? Is it really true that we Japanese fail to make people understand that we are friendly to them? An orator who once visited our village said that Japanese always fail to show their hearts to foreigners and therefore the world is suspicious of us. Is that true?"

He took the tiny teacup offered by the maid and drank its contents in the conventional three noisy sips. "Perhaps it is rude for me to speak thus to a foreigner, but I have often dreamed of America. I have heard that it is a wonderful land, with houses like mountains high, with stone on all the streets, and that there are automobiles for everyone and nobody is ever poor. Years ago a boy from this village went there, and now he has an automobile and a house with

running water. His father, like me, is a hard-working farmer. No one can get such luxuries here!"

The American took from his pocket a post-card picture of the Woolworth building and passed it to the farmer. "This is a miserable picture, but allow me to offer it to you. I just happened to be carrying it. It shows the highest building in our country. But they are not all like that, and there are plenty of poor people who have no automobiles."

The old man took the card and bowed again and again, his head touching the red blanket each time. "Your kindness frightens me. I have no words to express my gratitude for the wonderful picture. *Maah!* How great a building!" He tenderly wrapped the post card in a square cloth and tucked it in the depths of his *kimono*. "I shall show it to my fool-wife, and we shall place it on the shelf in the place-of-honor in our house, near the picture of the Exalted Emperor. How I long to visit America and see the stone streets, and the houses, like mountains high! But I am old and poor. Perhaps my son or grandson may go and see your beautiful country."

. . . . . .

The American had returned to New York. Tea houses and toy waterfalls were far from his thoughts as, seeking kitchen utensils, he entered a little hardware shop beneath the deafening roar of the subway which is elevated. An old German, worn and bent, poked furtively at piled-up pots and pans, while his wife kept up a rapid fire of scolding,

half in German, half in English. To get a wash-boiler, he disappeared through a trapdoor into a cellar dungeon, the virago remaining above. She upset a tower of saucepans, but the ensuing clatter was nearly drowned by her complaints and the roar of the trains overhead. At last the man crawled forth, bearing the boiler; then piece by piece the crowded shop yielded up the desired articles. Something wistful about the shopkeeper called up in the customer's mind the picture of that old peasant in Japan. Had this man, too, been a son of green valleys and soaring mountains, dreaming from afar of stone streets and houses like mountains high?

That afternoon the old German, laden with hardware, toiled up the hill to the customer's suburban home. He deposited his load and drew a deep breath. All around were trees and grass; gone were the roar of the "L" and the scolding of his wife.

"Mein Gott, I have forgotten trees and green things vass in the vorld. Here iss grass and flowers. And for months and months I see nottings but pavements and hear only trains and mine frau! Here iss quiet. Mister, I vish I vass you, living here! In the old country vass grass, and cows, and mountains, and stillness. Here iss only noise and stone, where I live."

The American nodded. "I know," he said quietly.

The old German's eyes kindled. "Sie sind Deutsch?" he queried.

"No, I'm not German, but I understand just the same. In the old country you used to dream of American wealth, of houses like mountains, and wide streets, didn't you?"

"Mein Gott, yes. But vass you in Deutschland?"

"No, but I have seen. The whole world is full of dreamers. But for only a few do the dreams come true."

"For only a few iss right. I have no more dreams, only vork. Good bye, mein freund. I go back to vork. But grass iss goot!"

TOAST YOUR TOES WHILE YOU SLEEP

Did you ever hear of a *kotatsu?*

If not, you know not luxury in sleeping accommodations. One visit to a hotel or residence in the colder parts of Japan in wintertime will acquaint you with the mysteries of the *kotatsu.*

Japanese rooms boast no carpets, chairs, or steam heat. The floors are covered with *tatami,* which are thick, finely woven straw mats, always three by six feet in size. They look clean and cool: particularly in winter is the coolness impressive. Then it is that the *kotatsu* does its bit.

Enter a room and you will see the occupants seated on the floor around a little square table. This table has no legs, but rests on a padded quilt of ample proportions, which appears to rest on the knees of the company. They, however, turn out to be sitting on the floor with their legs outstretched — not, in the usual style, squatted back on their heels. Their knees are thus not in the place where they would have to be to hold the table.

They will not rise to greet you. Instead they will lift up the edge of the quilt and motion you to sit with them and poke your nether extremities beneath the puzzling piece of furniture. You then perceive that they are sitting on little cushions; their feet are directly in front of them, under both table and quilt. When you cautiously poke your own

feet into the black depths under the table, a pleasant surprise awaits you. It is toasty warm there, in welcome contrast to the frigidity of the room in general.

The table serves for reading, writing, eating, and sometimes for poker, the latter having come to rival baseball as Japan's national game. If you are to spend the night, the mystery of the warmth beneath the table is solved at bedtime. The maid removes the square table top, then the quilt. A light wooden frame is revealed, explaining the table's stability. This wooden frame surmounts a concrete box a foot and a half square, sunk in the floor below the level of the mats. The *tatami* are made with a square opening to accommodate it.

This box is the source of the heat. It is filled with ashes, and buried in the ashes are pieces of glowing charcoal. The heat they generate is insufficient to make the slightest impression upon the temperature of the room, but it is more than equal to keeping the feet of the inmates well toasted.

Before making the beds the maid adds fresh charcoal, already fanned to redness in the kitchen, carefully burying the coals in the ashes to insure their remaining live throughout the night. Then she replaces the wooden frame and brings out from the closet the sleeping quilts or *futon*. The beds are made by spreading these on the mats, several thicknesses deep, and they are so arranged that the various beds radiate from the *kotatsu* like spokes of a wheel. When they are all ready, with little, hard, round pillows in place

at the end away from the fire, more quilts are brought in and draped over the *kotatsu,* making a sort of tent which extends over the foot of each bed. The wooden frame keeps the cloth away from the live coals, and only now and then are sleepers roused in the middle of the night to find their beds ablaze!

When, after a long immersion in the steaming waters of the Japanese bath, the guest returns to his sleeping room, he slides between the quilts and allows his feet to protrude beyond the foot of his bed, into the "tent" over the *kotatsu.* Solid comfort is a mild description of the sensation. The *kotatsu* atones for many of Japan's wintertime discomforts!

All goes well unless some restless sleeper disturbs the arrangement of the quilts composing the tent. Then the warm air gets out, cold air comes in, and when the feet of the company are well cooled off, slumberers begin to awaken and make uncomplimentary remarks about people who carelessly disarrange the *kotatsu.*

In the morning the "beds" are removed, the table top is replaced, and by the time the occupants of the room have broken the ice in the water pitcher and performed their heroic midwinter ablutions in the lower hall, they are free to return and poke their toes under the table while they eat breakfast in comfort.

Japan has cherry blossoms, charming scenery, fine banquets for visiting notables, poetic "atmosphere" for those who can be oblivious to mud and fleas, and charming

maidens clad in butterfly garb. Of all these things the poets sing. But he who has not reveled in the coziness and warmth of the *kotatsu* knows not Japan, and poets bent on singing the glories of the Land of the Rising Sun are hereby respectfully invited to remember the *kotatsu* when next they court the Muses!

NEW YEAR'S

Drums, a weird flute, and gongs are sounding down the street. The children run to the scene of action, for they know what is coming. The "dancing lion" is driving out the demons!

Slowly the sounds draw nearer and increase in volume. Sometimes the drumming is loud and furious, again it dies away. At last the gate bursts open and a strangely assorted procession files in. First comes the drummer, with a curious drum shaped like an hourglass and beaten on its wide, flat ends. He holds the gate open while the lion enters. What demon could bear so ferocious a spectacle as the approach of the lion? A fierce red head, made of gaily painted wood, with carved mouth and terrible teeth, is attached to a green cloth neck and body from which protrude two suspiciously human feet, clad in straw sandals. The head waves from side to side, drawing back and poking itself forward again, its mouth opening and shutting in realistic fashion. After the lion comes a man in a mask, an expressionless baby face suggestive of a corpse. This person dances his way into the yard, and close at his heels come the rest. One is pounding a little brass gong with a metal drumstick; another has a flute whose notes are wild and stirring if not musical, while a second drummer is pounding a big barrel-shaped tom-tom. Last of all comes the proprietor of the outfit, dressed in

THE "SHISHIMAE" OR DANCING LION

kimono and unencumbered by mask, drum, or other properties. His function is immediately evident — he bows and announces that they have come to congratulate us on the New Year, and hints that their services are deserving of recompense. Ten or twenty *sen* dropped into his waiting palm is sufficient to set the whole company in motion: the drummers drum furiously and the flute literally goes wild, while the masked man dances with more abandon than grace. The lion head waves menacingly to and fro and is poked into the corners of the garden. The demons being duly driven from the garden, the lion makes his way into the house, sticking his ferocious countenance into all the corners and behind the closet doors to make sure that no lingering demon escapes intact. Then with much bowing, the party moves on to the next house.

Barely have they gone when another drummer makes his way into the entrance. His companion, a young man dressed in a brightly colored *kimono,* or perhaps a priest in costume, opens his mouth in what is intended for song. Any attempt to reproduce these songs, or any other old-style Japanese music, for a Western audience, would be regarded as a scandalous libel on the Japanese. The more faithful the reproduction, the less would the Occidental audience credit it with authenticity. The yowls and quavers, the long-drawn-out caterwaulings, are beyond belief until they have been heard. This pair will stay and render the day hideous until they have received money or become convinced that

none is forthcoming. Usually they make themselves so obnoxious that people pay them to go, although their supposed object is to offer congratulations on the New Year. A Japanese of my acquaintance described them aptly as "high-grade beggars."

On the second and third days of the New Year these strange visitors multiply. The first day is given over to formal calls, when the men go out and call on everyone with whom they have relations of any sort. The wives stay home to receive callers and serve a cup of *saké* to each in turn. Of late years post-card greetings replace much of the formal calling. The average man still makes enough calls to be well "under the influence" before the day is over, as a result of the many cups of *saké*.

On the second and succeeding days women make their calls, with far less hilarity than the husbands. Children wear their best clothes; the little girls literally blossom out in the gayest colors. Young and old join in games of battledore and shuttlecock in the streets. The battledores are gorgeous, often expensively decorated with cloth bas-reliefs of well-known actors or old-time heroes.

The *geisha* and inmates of the licensed quarters add more color to the season. They don their brightest *kimono* and call *en masse* on prominent patrons, riding in long processions of 'rikishas. The *geisha,* protected by a fiction of respectability, wear the customary *kimono* and *obi*, their costumes far more brilliant than any worn by women of good

family and respectable life. The *obi* (sashes) of the girls from the licensed districts are tied in front, this being the inevitable badge of their profession. Their brilliant costumes and gay laughter and repartee as the processions pass, colorful additions to the New Year's festivities, make it easy to forget the status of the painted dolls on parade.

The firemen have their innings. Early in the gray dawn of the third or fourth day of the new year, one is awakened by madly ringing fire gongs. Smoke pours in the windows, from straw fires in the streets. This, with the wild clanging of bells, is sufficient to frighten one unacquainted with the custom. All day the firemen parade and "do stunts": the public reciprocates by contributing to brigade treasuries. Remarkable acrobatic feats are performed with light bamboo ladders. Members of the company hold ladders erect with pikes, while their agile colleagues climb, right side up, upside down, sometimes with hands free, and again with feet and body extended from the ladder, holding on with hands alone.

Even the humble horse and his leader (never driver, since cartmen lead their steeds rather than ride, there being a tax on passenger-carrying vehicles) have their day of glory. Each horse is decked out in red, yellow, blue, or orange — the same bright hues which appear on babies. Thus attired, the horses are led about the city, pulling carts laden with merchandise. Advertisements of the makers of the merchandise hang from the carts.

Parties of coolies hire motor trucks, decorate them with bunting, and tear madly about, imbibing *saké* and singing songs best left untranslated.

The streets have been decorated for weeks. Nowadays the decorations are put up in time for Christmas. Entirely apart from any inclination to adopt Christianity, Japan has joyfully claimed Christmas and Santa Claus for her own. Ignorant people believe that Santa Claus is the Christian god, and worship him willingly. The merchants are quick to take advantage of the opportunity presented by the new holiday. Thus the street decorations appear a week or so earlier than in former times — no chance for a celebration is neglected.

Before each house stand *kadomatsu* — clumps of pine, bamboo, and plum, bound with straw rope. Green branches are a welcome addition to the drab streets. Bamboo symbolizing fertility, and the pine long life, the combination is an expression of good wishes: long life and many children! Significantly, the pine alone appears in " restricted districts."

The Japanese New Year is a festival of the first order. No work is done for ten days or more after the big Day. The last days of the old year are filled with bustling preparations, which include the payment of all debts and, for gayer folk, a grand party on the last night. This party is known as a *bō-nen-kai,* literally, a " forget-the-year party." With the aid of *saké* and imported liquors, the parties do fairly well in accomplishing their purpose.

New Year is a democratic festival. The Japanese are surprisingly democratic at heart: the great man chats with his 'rikisha puller in informal fashion and, in many a household, servants eat with the family. Even the humblest share in the joys of holidays. Often the New Year's breakfast of pounded rice cakes and soup is a gift from the servants to the family.

Cakes of pounded rice are decorated with ferns and little red lobsters, together with a tangerine, kept on the shelf in the "place-of-honor" for a week or so, then are ceremoniously eaten. The pine and bamboo are removed from the gateway, a sprig of pine being left in the holes thus vacated. New Year's is over.

SNOW AND SMOKE

The Niigata express from Tokyo stopped, panting, for water, at the top of the long climb up the last range of mountains before the descent to the Japan Sea. Ice and snow transformed the engine from a snorting black monster into a sparkling hulk, looming dimly in the light from the station. A whirling blizzard covered the world; the fitful glare from the locomotive fire box cut a narrow swath through the white darkness of the night.

It was three-something in the morning, and only one passenger, laden with a suitcase, emerged from the long train. Wading through the drifts in front of the engine, he reached the wicket of the little station, already white with the burden of the storm. A sleepy attendant rubbed his eyes and looked twice at the ticket when he noticed that the newcomer was a foreigner.

Across the street from the station was a big two-story frame building, with drifts halfway up the entrance, and two jinrikishas in front, transformed by the snow into fantastic shapes. Within all was dark, save for a lone electric bulb somewhere in the depths, which cast weird shadows on the paper doors.

Gomen kudasai! ("I beg your pardon!"), called the visitor. No reply.

Ohayō gozaimasu! ("Good morning!") he called again.

For ten minutes he called and knocked, till at last a voice, thick with sleep, replied: "Yes, yes; what is it?"

"It is a foreigner, just arrived on the express. Might I ask the favor of a place to rest until daylight, and some food at breakfast time?"

The wooden bolts began to rattle. Before long, the door slid back, and the innkeeper, wrapped in a padded sleeping *kimono,* peered out into the storm.

"Oh, professor, it's you, is it? Come in. We're all in bed, but you may have a room. Let me take your suitcase. You won't get much of a breakfast. Still, we'll give you what we have."

The host turned on another electric lamp. When the foreigner's eyes became accustomed to the glare, he saw the usual raised floor on either side of the bare earthen space at the entrance. On every hand were humped-up piles of *futon,* or padded quilts: somewhere in each pile lay a member of the innkeeper's household. In the struggle against the cold, covers had been heaped until scarcely a head protruded. The air was acrid with wood smoke, and heavy with the odor of a tightly-closed sleeping place.

In the rear a fire smouldered in a stone box four feet square. An enormous iron teakettle was suspended from the rafters by a wooden pole on a swivel.

Wooden shoes and straw sandals lay scattered on the dirt floor of the entrance. The traveler made haste to add his

shoes to the collection and mount to the straw mats on the raised floor.

The innkeeper poked energetically at a mound of bedding. After a time a disheveled, sleepy maidservant of about fifteen emerged, rubbing her eyes in bewilderment while the innkeeper growled orders:

"Wake up here and make a charcoal fire for the guest. Put him upstairs in the front room. Bring him plenty of quilts and some tea. Get a move on!"

Excusing himself, the host crawled back into the welcome warmth of his own mountain of quilts. The girl ushered the foreigner up a stairway that was almost a ladder, and, sliding back the paper doors, motioned him into a large room. Save for a few cushions, a long picture and two shelves in the "place-of-honor," and a *kotatsu* filled with ashes, set in the floor level with the mats, the room was bare. Bowing to the floor, she asked the guest to wait until she could bring fire and tea.

Glad to warm his unshod feet by sitting on them, the foreigner squatted, Japanese style, on a cushion. Soon the girl reappeared with a bucket full of glowing charcoal, evidently secured by fanning the embers of the big fire downstairs. She heaped the charcoal on the ashes in the *kotatsu,* arranging the live coals with a pair of brass chopsticks. Another deep bow and she was off after cakes and tea.

Taking the chopsticks, the foreigner amused himself by

burying the coals in the ashes so that the fire would smoulder as long as possible, and warmed his hands above the tiny glow. The girl brought a tray with a very small teapot, a Japanese teacup without a handle, and a brass teakettle of hot water. A three-legged iron ring set up over the charcoal fire made an excellent place for the kettle to simmer. The steaming tea was a welcome sight to the guest. A lacquer box of cakes appeared, but after one look at the latter he was content with tea alone. After the maid had gone — presumably back to her quilts — his suitcase gave forth a few sandwiches better adapted to the Western palate than the highly perfumed rice cakes.

The girl had brought in a small mountain of *futon* of dubious cleanliness. Looking them over, the guest unearthed the usual night *kimono* provided by the hotel. He donned this clean cotton nightgown and inserted himself about halfway between the top and bottom of the pile of bedding. He knew from experience that his Occidental anatomy would protrude from either end: Japanese quilts are designed for short folks, and the tall man must curl up or freeze at both ends. By dint of folding up his legs, he was soon warm and sleeping peacefully, having long since schooled himself not to worry about the myriad bacteria on the quilts.

He was awakened by wood smoke, stifling, and mingled with other odors which made the blizzard seem attractive by comparison. The smoke was no cause for alarm —

simply an indication that dawn was at hand and the hotel force was beginning to stir. Pine sticks had been heaped on the fire downstairs; the smoke, being denied exit, furnished an effective alarm clock for the hotel guests. Dried fish in process of roasting over the open fire, pickled radish, and charcoal gas all contributed to the blend of odors.

The guest crawled out of his chrysalis and, taking a towel and soap from his bag, went downstairs in search of a chance to wash. The hotel, as usual, supplied an individual toothbrush for each guest — a little brush mounted on a handle a foot long — so the traveler was ready for the washroom. The washroom proved to be a tub of water in the kitchen. A hole in the ice on top, a brass basin, a fragment of mirror, and a tin sink completed the equipment. The hotel force gathered to see the white man wash, and appeared to enjoy the spectacle.

Returning to his room, he went in search of fresh air and a chance to get the smoke out of his eyes. Pushing back the paper doors at the front of his room, he entered a hallway which in summer time formed a long, narrow upper porch, now shut off from the weather by sliding wooden doors. A crack had admitted a small pile of sifted snow. This same crack gave him leverage to slide back the doors an inch or two and look at the village in the gray dawn.

The blizzard continued unabated. The chill fresh air was welcome, for dried fish roasting over a wood fire is something to avoid. The village was scarcely distinguishable.

Snow lay five feet deep on the level and had drifted over the tops of many of the low houses. Early risers were tunneling or otherwise opening paths from their doors.

A gaudy billboard on the roof across the way shrieked the virtues of "Life-for-Mothers," a patent medicine designed to extract money from the rural population, and boldly claiming to cure all ills from leprosy to croup, to give vigor equally to nursing mothers and professional wrestlers. The storm had topped the sign with an enormous white cap that took the edge off its garishness. No one seemed to be using the street except the postman, who labored through the drifts with a two-wheeled red handcart loaded with mail from the station.

Just then the maid appeared. "Here is your honorable breakfast. It is unworthy food, dirty and poor, but we beg you to enjoy it as best you can," she chanted perfunctorily. "I am about to receive a delicious feast," replied the guest, his voice as perfunctory as the sentiments he expressed. Inwardly he cursed a custom which forced him to lie while it permitted the maid unintentionally to tell the truth.

The breakfast consisted of a soup made of beans and soy, with an egg and a bit of fish in it. This, being hot, was edible. Then came rice and the roasted dried fish. Despite the smells and the tears in his eyes from the smoke, the foreigner possessed an appetite. But he balked at that fish. He toyed at the rice with his chopsticks, and after one nibble

at the scorched, "fishy" fish he gave up the battle and sought solace of the sandwiches in his bag.

One thing remained before leaving — payment of the bill. On being requested, the maid produced a tray on which the bill, neatly folded, was placed for his inspection. In Japan one pays the hotel one-third more than the bill indicates, for tips and "tea-money." If the extra sum be sufficient, the maid returns with a small present, usually a towel or a box of matches. Our traveler evidently did his duty by the expectant hotel staff, for he received a towel and a box of matches to add to his load. Amid much bowing and a chorus of polite farewells he struck off into the snow, glad to smell the fresh air of outdoors.

AFTER NIGHTFALL IN TOKYO

Japanese poets could not help producing the epigrammatic, impressionistic gems for which they are famous. The land itself has made them that way. Japanese artists could hardly fail to develop the simple, suggestive style which characterizes their best work. How could anyone avoid the desire to draw those phantom mountain peaks dimly towering through eternal mists, those rocky gorges whose perpendicular walls are no barrier to the sturdy, twisted pine trees which grip their sides like gigantic spiders from another world? How could anyone with a spark of romance in his soul walk the muddy streets of Tokyo on a misty evening and fail to wax poetic?

No matter how dirty the road or how boorish the coolies who stroll past, Tokyo, like all Japanese cities, breathes charm at night. Gnarled, spreading pines above ancient moats have survived from feudal days when gallant knights poured out their blood upon the grassy slopes, and, ghastly in the pale moonlight among the pines, corpses of disappointed lovers swung to moaning winds of the sea. The rattle of the "elevated" beside the moat cannot dispel such clustered traditions. Even the wild ducks which paddle each winter in the green waters, secure in the knowledge that no gun may be fired in the vicinity of the Imperial Palace, call back feudal Japan, when Tokyo did not hurry,

and bold warriors and beautiful ladies felt no shame at writing poems to pin to the trees.

When one leaves the hoary moats and their storied watchtowers, he does not escape the magic of Japan. Even in poorer and meaner streets, night casts her spell, mercifully screening from weary eyes the garish, hideous imitations of Western architecture. A pushcart, with gay banners on its sides proclaiming that good things to eat are on sale, slowly winds through the crooked streets. A lantern glimmers inside, where a charcoal fire cooks strange concoctions for Oriental palates. Its progress is accompanied by weird strains from a bamboo flute. Now and then the music stops while a quavering voice, expert from long practice in quavering, singsongs the menu.

The children play noisily; boys with tiny tops which ferociously attempt to spin one another out of a hollow of straw matting on top of a discarded box; girls who play hopscotch under an electric light, where they have chalked on the ground the intricate pattern for their game. In the distance young men and women gaily play battledore and shuttlecock — the chill of autumn has warned them that it is time to practice for New Year's, when everyone from grandpa to baby takes a hand in the game. Old women sit on the doorsteps of the shops, puffing leisurely at tiny long-stemmed pipes as they trade choice bits of scandal. Young mothers, with babies forever at their breasts, stroll back and forth, humming lullabies of Old Japan, interspersed with snatches of Occidental music.

ONCOMING NIGHT

Down the street a crowd has gathered before a brightly-lighted store, to hear a nasal jangle from a big loud-speaker, as some popular ballad-singer intones tales of the past over the radio. In the distance the moon shines through the mist, touching with silver the clustered pines and the tiles of an ancient gateway. Just inside a new entrance, cut within the very shadow of the age-old gateway, a man in livery washes a big motor sedan.

A bent old man hobbles along, beating a little drum to call attention to his stock of "home remedies." Cures for every ill to which the flesh is subject are carried in two boxes slung from a pole over his shoulder. The one-legged blind beggar at the corner has limped painfully to the shadow of the rich man's gate. With the assistance of friendly darkness, he is preparing to enjoy the evening. Carefully he unstraps his other good leg and stretches it to start circulation after its long concealment. Vigorously he rubs his sightless orbs till the make-up comes off and he blinks himself back to normal vision. His day's "work" is over.

A truck rattles past, scatters the children and leaves a cloud of smoke and a dying roar behind it. In its wake glides a smart limousine carrying "tired business men" and brightly clad *geisha* to a party. An oxcart emerges from a side street, the driver patiently plodding along in front of his powerful but unhandsome steed. In a tiny stand at the corner, 'rikisha pullers are taking off their one-toed, rubber-soled socks and stretching out on the mats for the evening.

From a house around the next corner comes a persistent, monotonous drumming. A group of Buddhist believers is holding a prayer meeting, probably for a soul lately departed or for the recovery of one seriously stricken. Let us hope that the racket is on behalf of one already beyond the sound of drums and the reach of magic. The sicker the invalid, the more loudly do the faithful drum.

A broader street is bright with electric lights and gay with care-free throngs. A "night-show" is in progress. The street is closed to wheeled traffic; both sides are lined with sidewalk stands, where one may buy anything from a fountain pen to a good-sized garden tree. A "barker" has collected a crowd and is demonstrating the virtues of a combination pocketknife, bottle opener, buttonhook, comb and screwdriver, all for fifty *sen,* with a bottle of invisible ink thrown in! "The chance of a lifetime, ladies and gentlemen! A million-*yen* corporation is negotiating for the purchase of this patent; if it gets into their hands the price will double! Step right up and buy — only a few left! Your last chance!"

A few yards farther along, a Buddhist priest in flowing robes and long beard warns the crowd against the dangers of foreign religions. The Salvation Army is busy with drum and tambourine directly across the street.

The districts inhabited by the well-to-do are dark and still. Everything is closed for the night. The lights in the houses are screened from the curious by high wooden fences enclos-

ing each lot. A girl trots past on scraping wooden clogs, carrying a paper parasol, as Japanese always carry them, handle down and point in hand.

The mist becomes a chilly fog. The voices of the children die away in the distance. "On such a night . . ."

The night watchman, alert for fires, makes his rounds in the deserted streets, beating two sticks together to assure the people that all is well. A distant temple-bell booms a deep call to remember Eternity. Tokyo is asleep.

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